

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY



125 523

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY



A Short Cut
TO
Good Riding

BY SINGERLY McCARTNEY

With vignettes by
Edwin Megargee

Duffield & Green
New York City

Copyright, 1932, by
DUFFIELD & GREEN

All rights reserved

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY THE CORNWALL PRESS, INC.
CORNWALL, N. Y.

*This book is affectionately dedicated
to the memory of my good gray
mare, Dolly Gray, the understand-
ing companion of many happy days.*

Foreword

S*OME of my readers, if any, may think that this foreword should be an apology. Nevertheless I hasten to correct any such construction which might be given this prologue. Emphatically this is only an explanation. Someone suggested that I should try a book on saddle horses. So one rainy day when I was ill in bed I started, and on many rainy Sundays I continued.*

Several very wonderfully sounding titles occurred to me, but as I found that I had no beginning, nor any particular continuity, it seemed unfair to disappoint a possible reader by what would follow a high and mighty title.

Even before I was well started I realized that I was writing only what I had told my friends in answer to questions either jogging

• FOREWORD •

along the highways and byways or toasting our toes before the fire after dinner when the conversation turned to horse talk. It is just made up of fragments picked out of my memory here and there. So as bits are fragments and horses are guided by them, I decided to call it "Bits." The Publishers, however, thought that it deserved a better name.

Now please for my peace of mind do not take all that is written here as "the last word" and "for heavens sake don't quote me."

Any stunts described I have actually done and I am still alive, but perhaps because the fool killer was on a holiday.

All the theories are the result of practise and if some inveterate old rider says they are all bosh, I can only say that I wrote my stuff for the open minded not too set in their ways.

Some of the names mentioned and many of the yarns go back a good many years. Still I am not so old. I started young and am still riding regular horses every day. Edwin

• FOREWORD •

Megargee, a life long friend has done the frontispiece, and I am deeply grateful.

Well anyway I hope you will like it. Struggle through to the bitter end and perhaps you will find a diverting yarn about an old friend or some theory worth putting into practise.

Contents

INTRODUCTION	15
BUYING HORSES	19
“THE PROFESSIONALS”	34
SELECTION	36
FEED AND WATER	66
BEDDING	76
RIDING:	79
MOUNTING	81
POSITION	90
“HAPPY DAYS”	97
FOLLOWING A LEAD	99
ELEMENTARY JUMPING	105
HORSEMANSHIP	109
OBSERVATION	136
DIGRESSION	141
EQUIPMENT	148
STABLES AND BARNs	161

Illustrations

	<i>Facing page</i>
Typical Virginia hunter	32
Morgan mare	64
The mount in full	86
Gray Dawn,—showing first position of the mount	128
Saddle for country riding, and various shoes	144

Introduction

YEARS ago when I was quite young I landed rather informally somewhere in the West and soon had the good fortune to meet that peerless sportsman Harvey Lisle. Having heard a great deal about buckers and having been rather roughly deposited numerous times by some of my grandfather's thoroughbreds which indulged themselves playfully in this uncomfortable exercise, I must admit that I had a well developed inferiority complex when contemplating the western broncho. Knowing that Lisle was an Englishman and had had about the same early education as I in horse lore, I asked him what he did in getting aboard a bucking horse. "Well," he drawled, "if I think he is going to buck I don't get on, and if he

• INTRODUCTION •

starts to buck after I'm in the saddle, I get off as gracefully as possible." Well spoken good advice from a courageous gentleman and true-hearted sportsman.

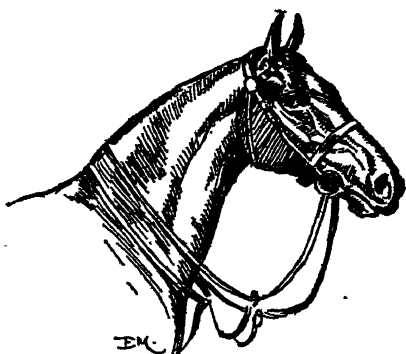
Little did I realize that within a short time riding the "green ones" was my best insurance of three good meals a day. But every man to his trade, and neither his nor mine nor yours is "busting skyscrapers" in an English saddle. Personally, I am reasonably sure that this method of breaking is unnecessary with a horse which is worth training. But on the subject of western horses I here and now tender my sincere appreciation to Will James whom, though I have never met, I read and reread with delight.

However, there is nothing so discouraging to a horse with a bucking tendency as to let him buck, and when he gets tired make him buck—and stay by him. Only recently an instance of this sort was thrust upon me, but when my branded friend found that she was

all through and we were still together, she lost interest and developed into a very fair saddle mare.

Spurs are a great asset with a mount who is inclined to go "high, wide and handsome" at times, and it is possible very often with spurs and reins to dissuade him from his evil ways without brutality—such as raking. Furthermore, even for the average good rider it is highly desirable to pull him out of it as soon as possible, as he may learn to "weave" and "swap ends" and then in an English saddle there is little to do but hope and pray.

"Pulling leather," as they term holding with the hands out West, has but little merit, which recalls to mind an old, old story about the man new to the West who, when his horse bucked, reached for the horn of his saddle, and when he came to was clutching a sprig of prairie grass.



BUYING HORSES

ONCE my grandfather had been disappointed in the get of an imported horse. He ventured out into the Blue Grass country, which he knew well, in search of a thoroughbred sire. We had a negro, long in our employ, who was without question the ablest man at faulting a horse who ever looked in a mouth. Seriously he was a rare judge and he was taken along on this trip for the genuine value of his opinion. The old sportsman and his valued retainer looked at almost everything on four legs in Kentucky. But William, upon being asked for his advice, faulted the best of them.

One old Kentucky Colonel was a trifle annoyed that the flower of his stable was being condemned by a negro, and even his well known tact was beginning to wane. A fine young thoroughbred stallion was finally led out. Poor old William could not conceal his admiration and excitement as he almost shouted in Grandfather's ear, "Buy him, Governor—buy him. Never mind the price." Then turning to the Kentucky owner, he said, "Colonel, how's that horse bred, Sir?" It was the Colonel's innings and he replied "William, he's sired by Destruction and damed by whoever owns him. Take him or leave him." Needless to say he was shipped to our stud farm in Maryland.

As often happens, I was once invited to go along with a friend to buy some horses. He may have known a horse's tail from a fly swatter, but I doubt it. He would knowingly look into the horse's mouth, feel his front legs, then stand up, puff out a bit, get a solemn under-

taker's expression on his face, shake his head and say to me, "What do you think?" This is somewhat characteristic of the amateur. They almost never look at the quarters, nor the back legs. They confine their inspection to those parts forward of the saddle girth, possibly because they are good soldiers and "a good soldier never looks behind."

Some years ago a man who is now a prominent lawyer, decided he wanted to play polo. Someone told him that I might have some good ponies for sale. Upon being approached I reluctantly admitted that I had. We saddled up a couple of horses and rode out nine miles to the pasture where I had a number of very good ponies, along with those of several other men. Without great difficulty I herded them into a corral and sorted out mine. Upon the way out to the pasture he told me of his marked ability as a horseman and judge, as I had explained the necessity of "picking them in the rough." I showed him three or four

splendid ponies, every one of them worth the asking price. He insulted them. Then he saw a rather showy animal and asked if it were mine. My reply in the affirmative drew forth almost a tirade. "Now he's a horse. The best one in the pasture. Shows breeding, has some action. I know horses and I'd be hard to stick in a deal." I could not resist. "Yes," said I, "but he's an expensive horse." True, true, too true! "I will have to get twice what I quoted for any of the others." With a magnificent gesture he replied, "Catch him up, saddle him and let me ride him." I did. "Sold," said he. And he was. I cashed the check quickly. A few days later he came to see me. "I say, you stuck me on that horse. Why they tell me he has a spavin and there is a big kidney sore on his back. They say he's the only poor one you've owned in years." There was only one answer: "Yes, but you stuck yourself. You are the only experienced horseman I ever

saw buy a horse with the saddle on, and of course, as for the spavin, having been fired, it must have been obvious to your experienced eye.” Of course, had he been anything but young and foolish he would have never been let in, and if he had been an experienced horseman and through napping been topped in a deal,—the best of them have at times,—he would have remained discreetly silent and bided his time. As a matter of fact I had refused to sell the gelding because he was unsound, to a clergyman, a doctor’s son and a young chap new to the game though a very promising rider. If a man acknowledged before sitting down to a rubber of bridge that he had only played twice before, you would not take his money, but if he announced that only last night he had taken Milton Work into camp for a large amount although only playing for a penny a point, you would naturally play your best and try to collect all you could.

So in buying a horse, profit by what the seller has to tell you. Ask questions. Do not wax too enthusiastic and never condemn. You will almost always have to separate fact from myth, especially concerning age. Then go over the horse carefully. Feel that part of his mouth against which the bit comes. It should be soft. Extreme hardness at this point often indicates a puller. Look at his teeth. Not only the length and cups but also the angle at which they are set into the jaw. If they protrude outward he carries age. Then look at his eyes. Test his vision with a handkerchief. Never heard of that? No, but horses do suffer from astigmatism which is often accountable for shying. See that his eyes are set well apart and that his nostrils are large and his muzzle fairly small. Then too, be careful of too short, too compact a neck. A little looseness between the throat and the shoulder on the under side shows a well proportioned windpipe capable of carrying plenty

of air from large nostrils down to the lungs, which are large, fine bellows if the brisket is deep, the chest fairly broad and the shoulder sloping. Look for marks of girth scalds which often, in a dark colored horse show up as white patches of hair. Look at his withers. An extremely high withered animal is difficult to fit with a saddle, and is often susceptible to sore back for the reason that when galloping there is a tendency to pitch the saddle back against his spine which in turn puts sores on the back, sometimes on the spine or on one side and just at the back edge of the saddle padding. Run your hand down his spine with your fingers on each side in order to spot any enlarged or faulty vertebrae. Press well down along the spine over his kidneys. This is more necessary in geldings than mares. If there is any indication of rigidity, repeat several times. Start him forward and then back and if there is any indication of awkwardness or lack of coördi-

nation in the hind legs, be very, very careful. Next look to see how he is coupled and make sure there is not too long a gap back of his ribs. Then to his quarters, seek full rounded quarters fairly high even to the point of being a trifle coarse, and with good heavy hams. Then lift up his tail, not only for evidence of worms but also for general condition. If conspicuously sunken it is indicative that the horse is not carrying his age well, though he may live to a ripe old age and work every day in spite of this. At the same time with the tail to one side, get behind him, mind he doesn't kick, and be sure there is sufficient distance between the hocks and fetlocks to insure wide, clean action. Look for a heavy hock, especially in a jumper. Feel both inside and outside of hocks and all around for spavin, thoropin, jack, or cap. Be sure that his hocks are far apart with no indication of his being cow-hocked.

Stand to one side and look at his fetlocks

to make sure that they are not over or sprung, that is, the joint too far forward. This is in some localities termed "cockled." For mine, I like a short, wide cannon bone and a low prominent hock with a medium length pastern to insure springiness. Do not only look at the pasterns, but feel all around them and up to the ankles or the fetlock for protrusions which bespeak side bones and ring bones and navicular disease. Look at the hoofs in profile, too. See that they are not flat, nor have any appearance of lamination, indicating founder. Pick up both hind feet and look for a clean, firm, well-defined frog, with a good spread at the heel and a round hoof. Be cautious of a long, narrow hoof or one with any evidence of spongy growth or anything resembling a corn or a thrush. The thrush may be readily determined by its very disagreeable odor.

Moving forward, look at the knees not only for a sprung knee but also chip marks

or scars. Feel them both at the same time and if the bone formation in both is the same, you are reasonably safe. Run your hand down each side of both legs below the knee to feel for a splint or bowed tendon. Often we are told that a horse is a little stiff in the shoulder due to a wrench, only temporary, will be all right in a day or two and doesn't favor a night when warmed up, only to find it is a chronic condition due in turn to a splint crowding a tendon in order to ease which the horse has taken the burden upon his shoulder, gradually creating a faulty muscular condition at this point. The shoulder is treated without satisfactory results, whereas had the splint been discovered in its early development and properly treated, the tendon would not have become tender nor the shoulder sore.

Look also for the evidence of shoe boil on the underside of the elbows.

As to the feet, pasterns and fetlocks, make

the same thorough inspection as in the case of the rear. Also look for scars or callouses or quarter cracks which mostly occur from over-reaching with the hind feet. This may be due to faulty shoeing—too heavy behind or too light in front, or it may be that he is just one of the incurables who would over-reach and go up on his quarters in spite of the devil. In a case of examining a jumper feel very carefully the front legs between the ankle and the hoofs for any evidence of navicular trouble which manifests itself just above the coronet, and in time results in a malformation of the hoof and the coronet. In final stage this is what is commonly known as side bone; and ring bone is similar and may be an aggravated case.

Just a hint: always in picking up a hoof, slip your hand down below the ankle or the fetlock and press your arm at about your elbow against the inside of the knee or the hock joint. Then the leverage is in your favor.

Bandage, or fuss around, the front legs from the side or rear, as a knee in the eye or on the end of the nose or chin is not so good. About the hind legs work from the front or side, because a hock or a hoof can give one quite a rap even at close quarters, whereas a "cow-kick" close up rarely does much damage.

Follow all these suggestions in buying a horse. Then think up some more of your own. Talk it over with a trustworthy groom. They are a good lot as a rule, better horse-men and worse riders than they are rated. Do not fail to consult the veterinary, unless you are fairly confident that you can detect any signs of unsoundness or the price is so attractive that you are willing to take a chance. Except in the matter of soundness often an experienced layman's opinion is of more value than the doctor's, as not infrequently he is a better judge of type.

If you do all these things, it will take so long that you will probably be too old for the

saddle, or else discover that your prospective purchase was retired from active service as a cripple after one of the early engagements of the Boer War.

If possible I always like to see a horse ridden before I decide in his favor, as I like to see how he goes and how he looks in action under weight. Then I like to ride him to see what his gaits are and how his mouth feels, how responsive he is to reins and signals. In a word I like to find out what he can do and how much he knows. However do not insist upon perfection, as a few days careful handling may correct an apparent fault, and then too he may not have done his best when you were to him a strange rider.

Buy for conformation rather than color. This may seem like needless advice, but experience has taught me that it is not. I do not fancy blacks, but a mare of this color was the best of either sex I ever owned and I

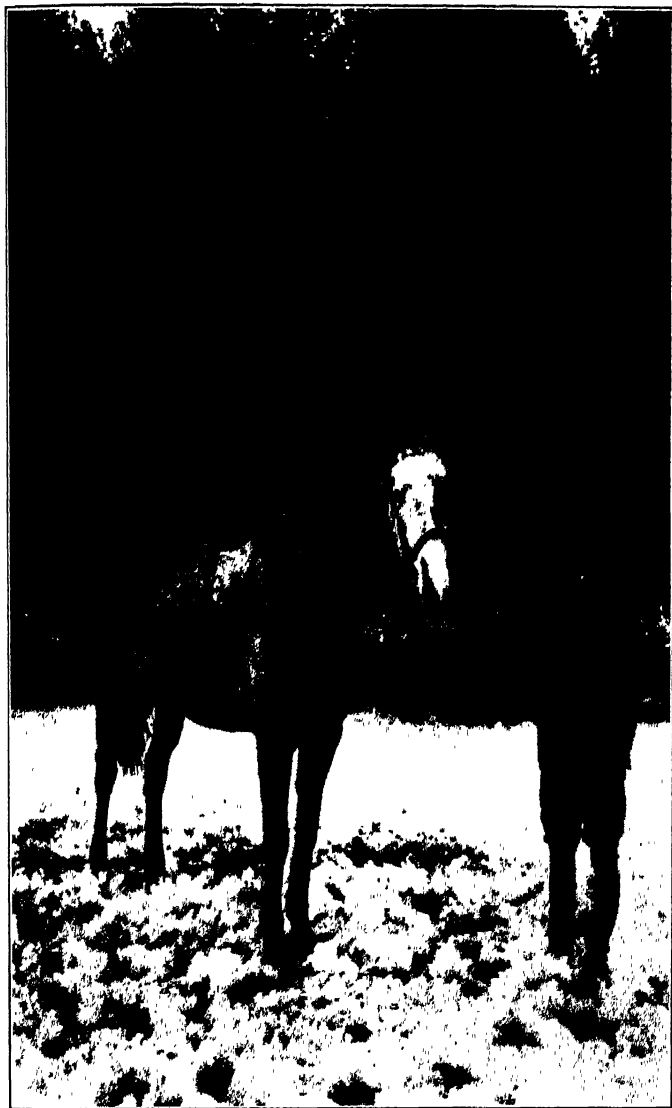
bought her as a lark. On the other hand I am an easy mark for a dealer with a gray.

The thought often comes to me whether judges in the show ring pin the blue on the horse which they would buy, all prices being equal.

It is an excellent practice when riding with a group of horses to pick the one you would buy, and then determine the reason for your choice.

But one more precept for your memory; better a horse that is sound at twelve than one which is a little off at eight, and better a horse which is sound at eight than one at four which may go off in schooling. The dangerous age is up to seven, less at six than five, and five than at four.

Ride him, walk him, trot him, canter him, gallop him and then listen to his breathing and watch his front legs. Don't buy a wheezer nor a trembler. After a hard race a horse will often quiver in his front legs, but

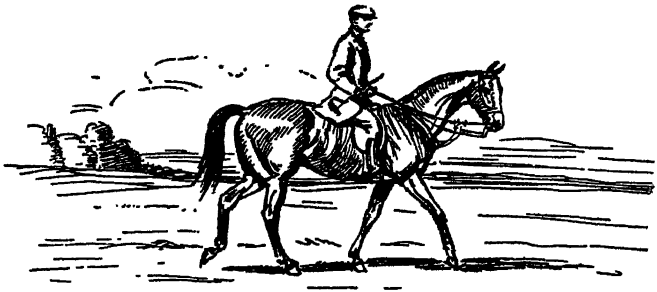


Typical Virginia hunter, qualified, three-quarter bred.

• BUYING HORSES •

that is due to the tension and excitement as well as the leg strain and is nothing unusual nor alarming. But in the case of a horse doing so after just a tryout, it is more often than not a manifestation of a weakness in front which will soon develop into definite and usually permanent faults. Wide, clean bone with firm, strong tendons is much to be desired, and don't buy a horse that is sprung in the knees.

•



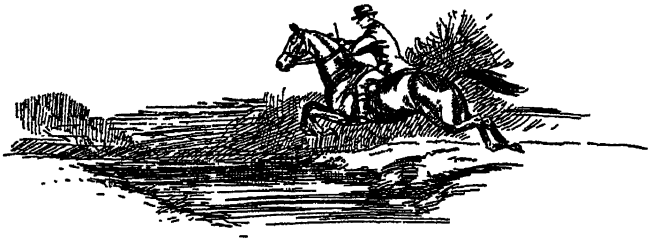
“THE PROFESSIONALS”

UPON a recent visit to Michael Knoud, a saddler of wide experience and rare skill, his wife, who is directing his business during his prolonged illness, recalled the fact that she had known for over a score of years the most prominent owners, trainers, amateurs and professionals in the land. Besides, she is further qualified, by her pedigree and early environment (being a member of a family long associated with and widely known among horse lovers in the “old country”), to express an opinion. She said “You know the professionals are often maligned. Say a word for them.” I can and will.

. "THE PROFESSIONALS" .

I have known numerous cases where trainer, jockey and groom have been even too faithful to their employers, rendering service out of all proportion to the financial reward or even the appreciation which they earned but did not receive. Instances even where a straight, honest dealer has been the victim of a buyer whom he has tried to serve, largely because of the purchaser's ignorance and his desire to appear "wise."

Many persons reading the above will "take it with a pinch of salt" and "wink the other eye." This attitude does not reflect wide experience, nor does it help to better the status of the professional, and a stable large or small is infinitely more successful where there exists a feeling of mutual confidence and understanding between the owner and the stable personnel.



SELECTION

QUOTING from an old family saying of several generations “I prefer performance to pedigree,”—but at the same time I am a devout believer in even the older and better known adage “blood will tell.” Personally, all things being equal, I will naturally pin my faith of the ideal upon the thoroughbred, but there are thoroughbreds and thoroughbreds, and some of them are “crazy headed critters” far too sensitive and high strung for the average rider. Then, too, it is conceivable to my mind that a so-called half or three-quarter bred horse may actually have better blood on both sides than a horse rated thoroughbred from two indif-

ferent, or ill-mated lines. Either for road, hunting or polo field I would trust my judgment, especially in the case of a mare, knowing her breeding, to select the individual rather than be influenced by all thoroughbred lineage. Then, too, in the case of a three-quartered mare of outstanding conformation and character, it is interesting and, if intelligently planned, profitable to breed her with a thoroughbred. This will give a seven-eights get with every reason to anticipate thoroughbred characteristics.

Many of the uninitiated at an auction will discriminate against a horse because of a brand classing all such as "Western and full of the devil." This is a very unwise decision. First because in nine cases out of ten the same horse minus the brand could be sold to such a buyer as a thoroughbred from "Old Kentucky"; and besides even the Mustang is not entirely cold blood; and furthermore many of the horses from the western ranches are half

and three-quarters, due to the fact that there has been for nearly forty years a crossing of native mares to thoroughbred and three-quarter bred sires. We find a parallel case to this in the Argentine horses.

One thoroughbred horse that stood in Colorado and Wyoming in the late nineties, so definitely marked his fillies that one could tell them at a glance. So look to the individual, not to the breed. A pedigree can much more readily be faked than performance and conformation.

With a little study it is interesting to note the progress which you can make in a comparatively short time in establishing in your mind the thoroughbred type and its peculiarities. Make a scrapbook and clip magazines for pictures of famous dams, sires and winners. Reproductions of old sporting prints are of great value, as it enables you to study the change of type. Note in this same way the difference in conformation between win-

ners on the flat and the famous steeple chasers. Anyone will be well repaid for a scrapbook of this sort arranged in chronological order and also divided as to types and nationalities.

Along this same line the study of a book recently published by Charles Scribner's Sons, written by Walter Shaw Sparrow, the title of which is "George Stubbs and Ben Marshall" is well worth while. Stubbs was born in the early part of the eighteenth century and his work as an animal painter especially of high grade horses covered one of the most interesting periods of the thoroughbred and hunter types in Great Britain. His study and accurate knowledge of horse anatomy is manifest in almost every piece of his work illustrated in this volume. Ben Marshall had a rare gift of color and where he has worked in hounds as an accessory he has also done something of great value and interest to the present day hunting man. His work came a little later than Stubbs and it is easy to note

the change in type even within a short span of years. His horses have a good deal closer resemblance to those of the present day.

The knowledge thus gained enables you to express unhesitatingly and intelligently an opinion of one or a group of horses, which may often be of value to yourself and of service to a friend. And in either buying for yourself or judging a purchase for another, be guided by the homely counsel of one of my family who often said "Remember that it costs no more to feed a good horse than a 'Pelter.'"

So much has already been written by authorities and abler pens upon breeding that it would be folly bordering upon impertinence to even introduce the subject in this very informal effort. It is not my intention nor desire to do other than to give a few friends a hint here and there which may be helpful. Unquestionably some of my pet theories are all wrong, and, as in the old saying in the

medical profession: "when the doctors disagree the patient dies." Nevertheless, forty years in the saddle is productive of ideas and in all cases I have tried to avoid opinions without reasons, and in every case the theory has been worked out in actual practice. Therefore, without engaging in the intricacies of breeding, there may here be a helpful word for the prospective purchaser, or even for the individual who possesses a good mare and would like to get a colt or two. Perhaps we can dodge the issue by saying that this is not horse breeding—but increasing the stable division of our family, or giving the old mare something to do next spring when business will demand too much of our time and next summer when it's too hot to ride much. Anyway, the children will love to have a nice little colt or filly, the baby of their old friend Fly-Away-Ann.

In the case of purchasing a saddler the first consideration should be character of the coun-

try and class of work. Having definitely determined these two points, then look for type, then a biddable attractive individual, and if a mare blood lines. Stallions are not included in these specifications because for general use as saddle horses they are not popular, especially in this country.

Locality means much and often should be the governing factor. If you can ride him there is no greater horse in all creation than the Irish Hunter. But he is bred and trained for heavy turf, wide high jumps, long gallops and carrying weight. He is stout-hearted, a bit headstrong. He is a delight through the trappy hunting country of his native heath. He is a rare treat over the West Country riding of Exmoor and Dartmoor, in the fascinating country of the Doones, which is now Devon and Somerset. He is a wonderful horse with all the lovable faults and the sprightly virtues of his nationality. He is Irish. But who under heaven would want to

ride a Galway Blazer on a pack trip up through Jackson's Hole?

A valued friend and a true horse lover has kept for years a beautiful pair of unusually fine Hunters purchased from Sir Adam Beck. He lives in the foothills of the Adirondacks—cow country with wire fences. When I see him jogging along the road I long for the Magic Carpet to spirit them off to Hartford County, Maryland, for a good run behind a lusty pack before they are too old to enjoy it.

A pair of good stout riding Morgans bred in the Vermont hills only a few miles away would be a better type for his use. Character of country and work are so obviously allied that in considering the one the other must be included.

In hunting country, Hunters, and here again get the right type for the going. For short fast runs, light turf, post and rail not too stiff, and a little brush, well, if you are not overweight you do not need so much bottom

and can sacrifice stamina for speed, but you do want Hunters. In the West the well-broken cow pony reigns supreme. Many can be obtained nowadays with a strong infusion of thoroughbred blood, which is to be desired. The question of the mustang's ancestry is much debated. For my part the theory of General Carter, U. S. A., is acceptable. They are like many others of good origin who, for a time, went astray amidst the vast bounty of our beloved land. These ponies twenty-five years ago made great promise for polo mounts. But the game has changed. It has had more development if not progress in the last twenty years than in the two thousand years previous. However, let's hope for the best and breed intelligently and perhaps time and the coöperation of the Polo Association will again give the American pony his day. He has intelligence and stamina and lots of courage. Properly schooled his easy gaits and sure-footedness make him a first-class

country horse for hacking and larking, but do not expect him to show up Tipperary Tim over the Grand National Course.

During the last few years there has come into this country a goodly number of Argentine horses, for whose introduction we should be deeply grateful to Lewis Lacey. It has been my good fortune to have ridden a few of them and I have seen many of them in action in the International Matches. There are individuals which I have admired excessively: strong, powerful stayers, with plenty of courage and an abundance of intelligence. These horses of our Southern neighbors are as a rule well bred as the breeders have been for many years importing outstanding thoroughbreds to mate with their native mares, so that many are seven-eighth, still more half and three-quarter bred.

They certainly offer tremendous possibilities, not only as breeding stock but on the polo field and road, and from their conforma-

tion and ruggedness should be able to qualify as hunters with patient training. Their native heath is a long ways off so that it is necessary to give them ample time to get acclimated before giving them very much hard work as was demonstrated a few years ago when the team from the Argentine had such a prolonged period of illness with the string which they brought up to play the Meadow Brook "Big Four."

Of course everyone dreams from time to time; one of my dreams is to acquire someday a couple of these horses and see if I can get to know them better and do a bit of hunting with them.

For strictly speaking park use there are three types which seem to me suitable. The first two: the five-gaited and the half or three-quarter bred hack I can probably "get away with"; but my third selection I am quite sure will smother me with protests. A Hackney? Yes, a Hackney. And why not? He has

style, action, r̄hythm, good looks. Most park riders go out for exercise and a lively Hackney will give one plenty. It is easy to hear the “slings and arrows” of my hunting friends, and the thunder of hoofs and the whirr of mallets as the polo crowd ride me off. “Why a coach horse? Why not a hunter with a trifle too much age for the field or a polo pony a bit too slow for the game?” In the country the last two mentioned make excellent mounts, but the park demands style and the gaited, the well-bred hack, and the Hackneȳ are “chuckin” full of it.

What is there more typical of American breeding, tradition and ruggedness than a well-groomed man in his topper and tails, slightly past middle age, maintaining the sport of his earlier years b̄y riding a well-mannered, gaited Kentucky saddler and with deft hand putting him through his paces? The change of knee pressure, position of hands, and the variations of seat for the dif-

ferent gaits require skill and mutual understanding.

And for another class of park rider, there is the charging hack with prance and capers and a world of show for the man who likes it and is still young enough to derive a little well-earned thrill from the applause of the gallery.

The sturdy young man or woman who must stay in town craves exercise, and naturally enough wants something with style and breeding and lots of action, so why not the Hackney—a show horse for the park; and incidentally the action can be modified and the canter improved by varying the weight and balance of the shoes. There is a good deal in favor of the trot for park riding; and with very little schooling the hackney can be made to canter. From training for generations he is responsive to the bit and the niceties of hand and biting and rein control become im-

• SELECTION •

portant and interesting. He is all horse, vigorous, active and certainly good-looking.

The United States Army and also some far-seeing individuals are doing some extremely interesting breeding and cross breeding with Morgans. The endurance contests humanely conducted and open practically to everyone are valuable in establishing data according to the results of these breeding experiments. In these tests the Morgan has proved his worth as a road horse and his adaptability for saddle purposes. From numerous indications this is to be expected, as Justin Morgan, the origin of the strain, was, it is now believed, very close to the Arab. Examinations of skeletons of old Morgans and post-mortems more recently made show the five lumbar vertebrae characteristic of the Arab. This pretty conclusively establishes the fact that the Morgan strain, carrying as it does some standard breeding—which in turn is not cold blood but has some thor-

oughbred blood as well—gives the family an honest right to the rider's serious consideration. This, moreover, gives us two general choices, either pure-bred Morgans or cross breeds. More of this later, but for the present let us consider the breed as a riding horse. He is built for service. The short back, the wide clean bone, the heavy hind quarters, the rather short pastern, the heavy hocks, deep brisket, all denote strength and endurance. He is thoroughly game. One glance at his head and eyes insures you of his intelligence. No great style to be sure, but there is a lot of beauty in a well-bred Morgan.

His characteristic colors sorrel, chestnut, bay, brown and gray (not so common) together with his high crown and arch vindicate our claim for Arab ancestry. Not as a hunter, nor as a polo pony, nor as a park hack, but on the bridle path or over country roads up hill and down dale, day in and day out, commend me to the Morgan.

Perhaps, however, regarding horses I am a little like the Scotchman who said "All wuskie's guid. Some is better than others." I might add some is better than none.

Howsomever, you will probably notice that great value has been given in what already has been written to hot blood, so like the small boy with the candy, we save the best for the last. The thoroughbred. Here is pre-eminently the glory of the race. Even if it is necessary to trace him back to one of three great sires, probably two of which were Arabs, still and in the last two hundred and fifty years he has held his own in peace and war, in the hunting field, on the road, on the race course both on the flat and steeplechasing and now with increasing popularity on the polo field. He is a distinct type and adapts himself readily to local conditions in all parts of the world. Whether in Argentina, Australia, England, France, India, Kentucky or Virginia, his influence has been for the good.

It is a source of sorrow to many lovers of this fine animal that we are doing him an injustice by racing him long before maturity, which cannot but help to impair both the prowess of the individual in his years of maturity and his progeny as well. Hence our larger breeders are constantly importing sires from overseas to reclaim lost ground for future generations. We have a perfectly splendid organization in our Jockey Club, and Joseph E. Widener Esq., a keen horseman and a splendid sportsman with his able associates is doing excellent work. It is sad to relate the recent death of Payne Whitney Esq., who though a newcomer to the racing fraternity was beloved by everyone from exercising boy to prominent owner, not only for his generosity but his sportsmanship and splendid personality. The Belmonts, Whitneys, Wideners, Wilsons, Keenes and a score of others have spent millions and devoted lifetimes to promoting the interest of clean

racings, fair play and the glory of the thoroughbred. There has been another group of owners: those who could only afford to race one or two at a time, whose names have never become so prominent but who nevertheless have been just as devoted to the sport and have been an excellent balance wheel for their brothers of the turf better endowed with this world's goods. But my pen is running riot and needs must check because soon I shall be digging into the archives and claiming pre-eminence for all time for certain jockeys and brilliant horses and memory carries me too far back, and boys like Willie Hand, Tod Sloane and Danny Maher and his brother, and horses like Lamp Lighter, Billy Kelly, Murallo, and Irish Lad, besides a long list of Good Wood, Derby and Grand National winners all justly ring in my ears for recognition. It is all in the day's work and we cannot refight the battles of the past.

However, would it not improve our Amer-

ican thoroughbred to limit if not abolish our two year old races, and sandwich into our program flat races over turf of two and a half, three and four miles, for matured horses trained for the long route?

Would this not bring the descendants of the Darley Arab, The Godolphin Barb, and the Beyerly Turk to even a better type than the sprinting two year olds that so often run themselves out in a couple of seasons?

If as many say they feel these conditions are true—then certainly the stewards and Governors of the Jockey Club, who have already accomplished what was said to be impossible, can certainly persuade our owners and trainers against bringing out their hopefuls at such early ages. The best of steeplechasers are the proof of the pudding. Forgive the digression and let us get back to the consideration of the king of them all from a saddle horse viewpoint.

There is no finer horse that steps on iron

than the thoroughbred. In almost any of the breeding establishments there are individuals each year which in early training do not show promise of sufficient speed for the track and frequently these horses may be purchased for very little. However, it is necessary to realize two points definitely. First that anyone buying a young horse takes a certain amount of risk and has an additional investment in time, feed and patience before the animal can give entire satisfaction. And the greatest of these is patience. Second, not everyone, not even all good horsemen can get along with thoroughbreds. It is a shame to see the way some unusually good riders attempt to handle this type. So it is that the half and three-quarter breds are so popular, and it is just as well that they should be.

Use the term "thoroughbred" sparingly and avoid embarrassment. Some years ago a friend was offered "just the mare, a thoroughbred Kentucky saddle horse" as the dealer

described his offering. My friend wanted me to see the mare before purchasing. I did. After some questions as to breeding the dealer exploded with sarcasm for me: "Why, what are you talking about, of course she's thoroughbred, her mother had a mark of 2.27 and her father was one of the greatest trotting stallions in Kentucky." My reply was only: "Yes, I thought she was standard bred." The mare was typically standard bred conformation, action, gait and in every other detail. However my good friend, being a rider and not a horseman, might have bought her and gone through life talking about his "thoroughbred." It is not my intention to disparage in any way the standard bred horse. It is a noble strain and should be perpetuated. Think of the names which it brings to mind, J. R. Gentry, The Abbot, Nancy Hanks, Maud S., Prince and Boy Wilkes, Marion Mills, Joe Patchen, Lou Dillon and many, many more of equal prominence and merit. Who could

ever have seen dear old Pop Geers training a youngster or piloting home a winner without being inspired? The Vanderbilts, Lorilards, Leonards, Singerlys, the Thompson brothers, Judge Moore, Judge Stotesbury, Dr. Webb, the Forbeses and again scores of others who delighted in a brush with their spanking road pairs is undying proof of the importance of the trotter in American sport.

There is a tendency among certain dealers, however, either through ignorance or design, to misname an individual. That is, they size up a prospective buyer and, if, after a few moments conversation, they find that said prospect is innocent of horse lore and uninitiated in the tricks of the trade, soon discover what type he fancies, and then turning to the ever-ready groom say: "Jimmy, bring out that six year old hunter. You know, 'Pride of Virginia.' That black gelding with the white nose." Pride of Virginia is trotted out. Yesterday he may have been shown as

Pecos Pete, the greatest unbranded cut-out pony of New Mexico, or Le Coup, best Argentina of unrecorded triumph because although a great polo horse, he had a slight attack of sleeping sickness during the Internationals and never earned his rightful fame. No, sir, this is not rot. Only recently some friends sought my advice about breeding a hackney mare which they had owned for several years and had schooled as a saddler. Upon being asked if they wanted to know what was to me apparent, they replied in the affirmative. "Well," said I, "you are to be congratulated upon possessing one of the most typical and beautiful Morgan mares I have seen in years. If there is any hackney blood present it would require a laboratory test, blood count and all to determine it. Breed her back to a Morgan sire which has produced some good saddle animals, and get a first-class horse for your lovely hill country hereabouts."

There are lots of good straight dealers of

unquestioned integrity—but with some a sale is a sale, and something for the bank. “Give the buyers what they want.”

It is impossible in rambling along to keep my pencil from an occasional anecdote and my only hope is that in most cases there is a useful moral to adorn the tale. In buying a horse the veracity of the seller must also be considered, as the best of horsemen sometimes go wrong. An honest vendor can usually tell you more in a few minutes than you can discover in as many weeks, and lots of them will do that very thing.

Hunters and polo ponies, the latter now a misnomer as they have outgrown the pony class, have not been discussed in detail because it is here as with Horace Kephart in his excellent book “Camping and Woodcraft”: he does not say too much about guns as everyone has his own preference. Still, a little has been already mentioned and perhaps a little more may not be amiss, although both sub-

jects have been so ably presented elsewhere and so much is constantly being written that it is almost with a feeling of reluctance that anything more than a very sketchy survey is here attempted. Seldom, if ever, do nimrods agree upon what constitutes a good hunter; and by the same token a polo mount which has given excellent service to the redoubtable Hitchcock, the ever steady and able Milburn, the brilliant Lacey or the dashing Roark might be condemned for the game as not being schooled by John Doe of Squeedunk who never had a mallet in his hand until he was thirty-five, after making a couple of millions selling shoe buttons. And the real fault would be that this man was too slow for the horse. There are many of the duffers in polo who would play infinitely better on old, sure ponies, a trifle slower perhaps but speedy enough for the rider's ability. Coördination in the average human being becomes noticeably lower at thirty-five and in buying either

a hunter or a polo pony you will do better, all other things being equal, to select one whose coördination, as nearly as possible, synchronizes with yours. Frequently a man who would be a very fair player keeps constantly in difficulties on the field because his horse is too fast for him. Better let someone beat you to the ball than miss it after getting there first. Far better to let someone turn inside you on a change direction than be clinging to the pony's ears and so not even be in position to hit when a fast, brilliant pony has already done his share. Besides, this ruins a good pony. He knows the game and gets discouraged just as a well-trained setter or springer or pointer quits when you do not knock down the birds. The same condition prevails perhaps to a lesser degree in the hunting field. We cannot all be Dick Donnellys and ride Heatherblooms to break the world's high jump records. And many of our best cross-country men of a few years ago are

wisely content with the big heavyweights also carrying a little age, not so fast, not so heady, but safe and sure. These big boys bring them in at the death, and give the youngsters the glory of being first in or at least in the first flight. Yes, and they can say that Foxhall Keene, still an unbeatable horseman, was in the field. These men, "stout fellows," hard-riding, true-hearted sportsmen like Henry G. Vaughan, Victor Mather, Watson Webb, W. C. Langley, Howard Potter, John Bowditch, Hyde, Higginson, Clothier, Cobb and a whole host of others will ride straight to hounds till their dying day—but they'll ride and so will you and I, if we pick our horse.

Recently I went larking on a big half bred Irish horse, twelve years old, game, strong and sound. He gave me some splendid rides. His owner is in his early thirties. He paid a little too much for his horse—but that big sensible fellow is worth twice what his present owner paid for him to a man over forty-five.

My compliments to the veterans, especially Mr. Harry Page who, a few years ago at sixty-six years of age, on a horse sixteen, of his own training, won the United Hunts Steeple Chase. He and his sterling timber-topper knew each other, worked together and took their jumps at the same time. And although, I am glad to say, still far from sixty-six Crawford Burton, who with Brose Hoover won the Maryland Hunt Cup in 1930, was riding steeplechases when most of his present contemporaries were still in their early teens. I have always admired his riding and each succeeding year marvel at his spirit of carry on; and may he still ride for many years and have many happy returns of his numerous victories.

And here is another governing factor in hunting as in polo and almost all other sports: balance and timing. Perhaps there is a shade of difference, but they go a long way towards establishing, if not comprising coördination. A man boxing off-balance from a badly timed

lead is pretty likely to get hit. A man off-balance from a turn slow enough for his horse but too fast for him is more than likely to ill time his next drive and miss or top the ball. In the hunting field, faulty timing at a jump throws horse and rider off balance, and they come a cropper.

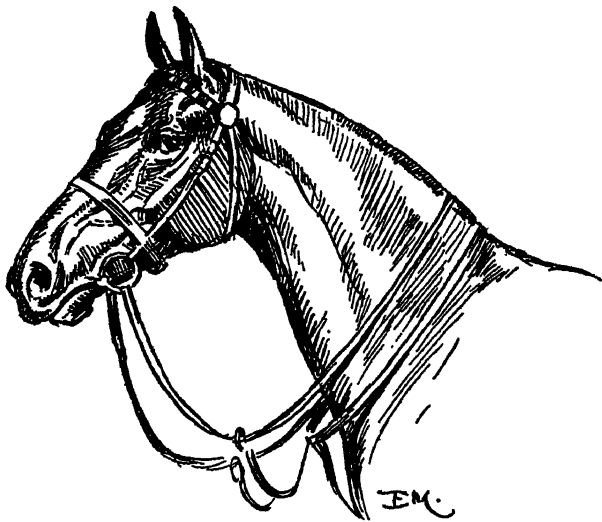
This recalls to mind a Philadelphia sportsman a trifle over fifty, who bought two exceptionally good heavyweight hunters. One day I asked him how they were going, and he replied that he had sold one but the other like our Scotch friend "is still going strong." Then he replied that in truth, while he had the two, it required his spending most of his time in the saddle in order to give them enough exercise so that he could ride them at all. Of his remaining one he was a little apprehensive about the next encounter as he had stood in a few days and he would not be able to ride for a couple of days owing to other important engagements. Upon my suggesting



A rugged little Morgan mare, sure-footed, willing, courageous,
a splendid hill-country saddle horse.

an old trick which is good practice, he was much relieved:—feed more bran and hay and less hard grain when they are standing in. It is better for them and when you take them out they have not nearly so much wire edge, safer for horse and rider. This reduces the danger of a wrench or a slip, and also black water. Then warm them up a bit, and cool them carefully after your return. If in the grass season, take the horse out on a halter and shank and let him browse. Be careful not to let him get enough to bring on colic. Now he may scowl a little: but worry not, this is nature's conditioner. Then if you are riding again every day, increase his grain content and reduce the hay to normal in his daily ration.

Do not be afraid to use bran mixed with oats in a dry mash, but mix them thoroughly by hand. And this is really pertinent to the next chapter on feeding.



FEED AND WATER

SOME accepted authorities might term my notions on feeding as radical. No, they are just old-fashioned. Up in the country the farmers would not even give me the benefit of being crazy—no, I was plumb ignorant. However, it was and is impossible for me to share their theories. One of their pet ones is that a young horse has so much vitality that he does not require much grain,

and that an old one does not either as he cannot do much work anyway. There is no doubt that their young horses would mature more ruggedly and not age so prematurely if not forced, through lack of grain, to constantly draw upon their diminishing resistance in order to do their daily work. Then, too, after a period of light work and little or no grain for their horses, in the late autumn the farmers will get ready to skid logs or haul ice by beginning a day or two before starting operations to literally "throw the grain into them." This raises havoc with their digestive organs, their intestines, and their kidneys, and the processes of elimination get entirely disorganized. The results are colic, black-water, founder, and what-not and dead horses. Some saddle horse men believe in but two meals a day. Some others advocate three, but with no hay at noon. Some of the old timers, however, still believe that man and beast will do better on three squares,—as nearly as possible on time.

There is much in favor of the last mentioned routine of diet. Hay to a horse is what bread and butter is to a human being; grain is the fish and meat course combined. Would you eat just a slice of roast beef for luncheon without some bread or potatoes or something of the sort to wedge it in? Even during periods of idleness or light work, a little grain is desirable. This makes it easier to get the horse on edge again. Oats, of course, is the standard, but work in a little bran and be guided as to quantity by watching elimination. In winter a ripe eating apple cut in quarters and handed out by the piece serves as a relish. However, particular care must be taken that these apples have not been frost-bitten and they must be used distinctly as a relish, an appetizer, not in quantities to substitute for a meal. A couple of carrots, greens and all, serve either as an aperitif or a sweet. Beets I have not much faith in and never use. Many horses will refuse them. Lots of horses

will delight in a few leaves of lettuce or some bits of celery. None of these need be introduced into his regular diet; but neither is caviar essential to ours, though at times very welcome. In summer our household never wastes the nice green and white husks of table corn, but the children make friends with the horses by doling them out one by one. Pea pods are not so good and rather to be avoided. Idiosyncrasy of taste is only a mark of individuality. My saddle mare delights her palate with maple leaves, and sauntering through a woods or a bridle path never misses any variety of maple. However she is as queer as Dick's hatband anyway. One evening we found her in the kitchen eating the dog's oatmeal set on the back of the stove to cool.

As to quantity, close observance and judgment are your best guides. Even under ideal conditions, with good teeth and normal digestion, some small horses will starve on

what some large ones would thrive upon. This has been demonstrated to my complete satisfaction time and again.

According to the amount of the work the actual ration should be scheduled and the balance between oats and bran determined for the individual need. Just as Lieut. Col. Goldsmidt in his very estimable book "Stable-wise" points out, it is the man who is actually doing the feeding who can best determine these points. Over a recent period of two years I have made it a point to watch this very carefully with the result that with ten head of horses of varying types we have not only been able to reduce the cost and the consumption of food materially but have actually put our horses in better condition. In this stable we have entirely done away with the mixed ration of various patented brands and have employed clean feed oats and best quality bran. In a locality where it can be readily procured good barley and a bit of flax-

seed occasionally will often tempt a temperamental feeder. However, as in the old saying, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," I hesitatingly make this recommendation because of the fact that it might mislead the reader into getting a horse onto a regular diet of barley, which many authorities feel is a cause of laminitis; and even flaxseed should be used sparingly. We have also made a practice in the case mentioned above to give two hot bran mashes a week, Wednesday and Saturday nights. We prepare this mash as carefully as an old maid brews her tea, using fresh cold water brought to a boil, scalding a hand-mixed mash of a little salt with bran; then with a wooden paddle stirring until the mass is thoroughly mixed and free from lumps. By this time it is cool enough to feed. The horses relish it and from every indication it is extremely beneficial.

Before giving expression to other thoughts on other subjects which keep bobbing into

my head, let me tarry a moment to say a word about hay. It is a first rate barometer of the horse's condition of health. Most horses relish their oats, many their bran, but the one which is a good hay feeder is nine times out of ten a good stayer. However, give every horse the benefit of the doubt and if he does not eat all of his hay, you yourself examine its quality. Possibly it is weedy or dusty, wiry or too fine. Then again there may be too much clover, or too little red-top and timothy. Now, if your stable is right in the hay country, loose hay is excellent, but experience has taught many that although baled hay is more expensive it is more uniform in quality. We all have our personal preference; but from farm experience I know that it costs \$2.50 per ton to bale hay, and that usually the best of the crop is baled as it is to be sold to professional buyers rather than to the neighbor who runs short in March or April and is shopping around and does not always

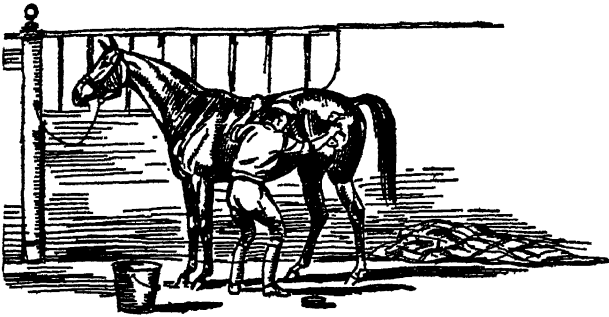
pay promptly. A good strong stem hay with plenty of body is to my mind the best. Feel it, twist it into a cord, break it, see how much dust shakes out, smell and taste it to see whether it is sweet or musty. A hay from soil rich in mineral content, especially limestone, helps build bone and tissue. However, if the horse still does not care for the hay, try variations. Try blue grass, alfalfa, legume, vetch and rye planted 15 pounds of vetch to a bushel of rye to the acre and harvested and cured when the vetch is ripe. Also watch the manure, and if undigested oats appear call the veterinary and have the horse's teeth floated. Do not let the groom nor the farmer up the road do it. Get the vet. Rasp files, saw files, and nail files are dangerous weapons in a horse's mouth and a sore mouth is a devilish torment for a horse and lockjaw worse and more of it.

A word of caution, if you find yourself with a mow full of dusty hay, sprinkle it

before each feeding, as this will largely prevent hay cough which in turn sometimes develops into a chronic irritation. Some stables are using with marked success a chopped hay as another form of roughage, and although my experience with it has been very limited, it is very well thought of by an increasing number of horsemen.

Salt is necessary and a salt lick is the accepted method. Where horses are taken to a trough to water, it is a good plan to have one nearby. Some stables have it mounted on the washstand so that when a horse is being hosed or bandaged he can get a little salt to sooth his nerves. Often I mix dairy or table salt into a dry bran and oat mash and they ask for more. It is a growing custom to place permanent salt racks in the stalls. This is of questionable value as with most horses it is either a feast or a famine, and after the feast of Lot's wife the beastie usually bloats himself on Adam's ale.

As to water, lots of it but in small doses, and do not be afraid to water afield if the water is good. As a matter of fact most horses know water better than most men, and are infinitely more fussy about what they drink. It is often advisable in the colder climates to temper water especially in the winter. This can be readily done by having a large watering trough where the water can stand an hour or so before being given to the horse. This method is just as practical in stables where water is given in the stalls in pails as where the horses are led out to water.



BEDDING

SOME horsemen who needs must sleep on an all hair box-spring mattress between linen sheets and under a camel's hair blanket with a silk comfy on top never give any particular thought to how their horses are bedded down.

It is not wise to pamper a horse overmuch as to stable clothing, but a bed is a bed and the best is none too good.

There are three varieties in general use: shavings, peat-moss and straw. I purposely omit tanbark as its use is not common except at an occasional show. After one disastrous experience I should never again let a horse

• BEDDING •

of mine be so bedded. Some horses will nibble it and apparently it has some ingredient which produces an accumulative poisoning, in our case nearly fatal.

Shavings cake up, hold moisture and in a cold barn hold the frost. But they are cheap and if carefully shaken out morning and night are not too bad.

Peat-moss in box stalls and under mares in stand stalls is entirely practical though it makes a deal of grooming necessary. But in a damp barn or damp climate commend me to it. However, its greatest virtue is its greatest fault for it is my opinion that it has a tendency to dry the hoofs, necessitating constant packing. But with any bedding the feet, especially the front, should be regularly and carefully inspected, for a horse is no better than his feet.

And now, regardless of color or breed or birth, there is nothing prettier than a well-groomed, smartly-blanketed horse lying com-

fortably on a good thick bed of nice clean straw in a big box stall. But the greatest fault of straw is "it shows the dirt." Yes, and also a rare virtue as a constant reminder. Many will say that the horses will eat it. The answer is: it will not hurt them much and bedding muzzles are only about one dollar and twenty-five cents apiece. However, where cost must be considered it is true that in many localities straw is quite a lot more expensive than other beddings. There is a practice in some stables of cleaning away the bedding every morning. In a large work-horse barn where most of the horses are out all day this unquestionably has advantages. Nevertheless in a stable of saddle horses it is not a good practice, as a great many like to lie down during the day, especially after a hard gallop, which it is well to encourage. It relaxes them and rests their tendons.



RIDING

WHEREAS it is not my intention to lapse into the theories of equitation, as such would be only another endorsement and appreciation of the admirable work of Col. McTaggart, still, having ridden the forward seat long before it was so named and recognizing certain limitations and combinations which have seemed necessary to my individual case, I may be able to offer a few simple suggestions, irrelevant to the student of haute école, the advanced equestrian or to the M.F.H., but still helpful to the average rider who likes to jog the bridle paths and dirt byways and occasionally

likes a scamper cross country after a good pack.

Having received my early education in horsemanship in this country at the advanced age of thirteen, I had the good fortune to hunt most of a season with that sterling pack, the Somerset and Devon Staghounds, over the picturesque country of the Doones, embracing Exmoor, Apaxmoor and Dartmoor. It is still fresh in my memory that my mentor, one of the greatest sportsmen of his day, Henry P. East of Chiselhurst, cautioned me to sit forward and keep a light but even pressure on my reins and have them short enough for immediate control.

Another season I had another go at it, and following the advice of my guide, philosopher and friend and often coached by that native of Dulverton known in every hamlet of Devon and Somerset as a stout-hearted man cross country, John Moyle, I was usually able to

be in at the death—and felt safe and sound in doing it.

So, although most of the credit for the forward seat is allotted to those masters of equitation, the continental army officers, I still feel that in my sense of loyalty to the West Country Riding that honor for it should be shared with the nimrods of Exmoor.

This is only summing up in other phraseology the vastly interesting, instructive and logical theories of Colonel McTaggart. His patience, and wonderful ability in explaining the details is a rare and priceless gift to everyone even contemplating having their grandchildren taught to ride, and no horseman however expert but can profit by reading "Mount and Man."

MOUNTING

There are numerous styles of mounting, possibly all correct, but for our purpose here

only one will be described in detail. This is not because the others are not so good, but because this one does not require a well-trained horse nor a groom to assist, nor a horse block. I have seen good riders thrown and try to remount in the field and have an embarrassing time of it for a few minutes, sometimes without any definite plan of attack.

The horse, being a little nervous or excited, is not just ready to assume the even tenor of his ways, and really is not quite sure that he wants to be ridden at all. This is not peculiar alone to fuzz tail "broncs" or any other variety, but may happen with a well-mannered horse.

One who mounts easily and quickly even though the horse is a bit fussy will receive the approval of any horseman who is looking on even if there is a difference in form. The fact that many horsemen and horsewomen have standardized this style of "getting

aboard" is sufficient reason for its recommendation.

First off, mounting is important as especially with a strange horse it is in the nature of an introduction. It should be positive without being aggressive. Assume assurance though you have it not.

Gather up the reins in the left hand, the snaffles on the outside, the curbs in, and then draw them fairly taut and short, particularly the snaffle, so that your left hand is about opposite the cheek. Slip the middle finger through the throat latch to maintain the position of your left hand. This will place you where you are looking about three quarters towards the rear. Take your stirrup leather a little above the stirrup in your right hand. Now if your steed is fiery, you have him where you can use your strength and weight to the best advantage. You can always turn him towards you instead of away from you. Raise your left foot and place it in the stirrup and

be sure that it is well in. As nearly simultaneously as possible raise your right hand and get a grip on the stirrup skirt on the off side, then spring from your right foot. Don't hop, and hop again. With a little practice one spring is enough. Next straighten out the right leg and swing it high over the horse's back. This last for two reasons: one that it looks better, more shipshape, and the other that many horses decidedly resent being poked in the small of the back with either a boot or a spur. As you settle down in the saddle release the finger hold on the throat latch, and let your left hand slide along the reins until it is in riding position and your right is already to supplement it, or to place the off stirrup if necessary. However, if your leathers are the proper length and well twisted and you ride with a heavy stirrup, your right foot should find the off stirrup without the aid of the right hand.

As written this may sound rather compli-

cated, clumsy and graceless. The illustrations may serve to simplify the instructions and with practice it can easily be made a rather distinctive, graceful mount. It is safe, and gives the rider a good deal more control than the usual forms of mountings. Having used it for years I am convinced that it is practical. The basic principle I learned in the West from a cowboy named Ireland, but I have modified the original to adapt it to an English saddle.

Perhaps the less said by me about dismounting the better, as I have a holy horror of having one foot in the stirrup and not astride my horse. Therefore I gather up my reins in my left hand, resting it just forward of the withers, and place my right hand on the saddle in front of me. Then I free both feet of the stirrups, and straightening my right leg swing clear of the saddle and horse. This brings one in almost the exact position, except for the hands, from which to mount.

For photographs opposite:

The bottom panel shows first position of mount, cheeking the horse with the reins gathered in left hand. The right hand in fixed position on saddle. Note how this turns the horse toward the rider.

The middle panel shows straight right leg clearing the horse, maintaining balance with body, and left arm forward, face out of way of the horse's head, left foot thrust home in stirrup, right hand in fixed position.* *Through the whole operation there are always three points of contact, balance, and good control.*

The top panel shows the middle view from the far side, giving position of the right hand, and indicating again the tendency of cheeking to bring the horse toward the rider.

**The obviously exaggerated position of the right leg in the middle panel is due to the necessity felt for emphasizing the importance of amply clearing the horse's back.*



This I admit would not do for the parade ground, the tanbark, Central Park, the Bois, or Rotten Row, but if you want to get off it is a safe and sure way to do it.

Note: Many persons in trying the mount described above will at first think that it is only possible for the average size individual to do it successfully on a small horse. Such, however, is not the case, as I am quite short and frequently ride one hunter standing a trifle over sixteen hands. And I am not so good. Anyone can do it.

It is well to remember, if the ground is wet, to dry or roughen with sand, gravel, or a bit of stone the sole of your left boot, so that when you put your weight on it your foot will not slip out of the stirrup as you mount. This is especially important if you are getting on a large tall horse.

It is a great temptation in writing a thing, hardly call it a book, of this sort to attempt to cover too much ground, to be too inclusive

as it were. It is for this reason that I omitted much that might be said, and has been well written about in many regular books, by honest-to-goodness writers. For example, it is a very simple matter to learn a military mount or any other variety which you may fancy, and mine is perchance just a stunt. Be that as it may, it is the exchange of ideas which enable us to learn the kinks and tricks and makes horse-talk worthwhile. And now after this belated preface let us wander along to another "stunt." For want of a better name I have dubbed it "slipping the curbs" or "thumbing the curbs." I take it for granted that other horsemen do it, and I drifted into the habit quite unconsciously, and I know not when. However, I have never seen it described and I will try to explain it.

When riding with either a Weymouth or a Pelham, it may become necessary especially in company, to emphasize the curb. This often is the case in showing a horse, as some

“show better” with a little more pressure on the curb. Yet one does not always desire to make this apparent. Split the reins, keeping the hands close together, release the squeeze of the little fingers on the snaffles, and pinch the curbs between the thumbs and the second joints of the index fingers. Then by slightly bending the wrists a considerable pressure may be produced upon the curb, without giving an onlooker the impression that one is pulling. Just as soon as your purpose is accomplished, you may reunite your hands, weave your reins and jog on your way serenely. I never realized that I did this until one day riding a spirited colt my companion of the road asked me how I “took him down” so easily when he lunged. That set us both thinking, and we finally discovered what I was doing, yet I have done it as long as I can remember, but did not know how.

POSITION

Away back in the latter part of the gay nineties when the average American rider was trying to recover from the “ram-rod and useless arm” posture we began to hear about the “racing crouch” and the “hunting stoop.”

There really were such things, and are now, but at that time the former was usually attempted by small boys who hoped that someone might mistake them for a jockey, and the latter by those who lived in the neighborhood of a pack of hounds.

This is of course an exaggeration but it is characteristic of the reaction which followed the revolt against the very formal style of riding which had been in vogue for many years.

Today we find a somewhat similar condition regarding the forward seat. Many who have only seen it and talked about it try, sometimes rather pathetically, to affect this sensible position in the saddle with the result

that they look like misplaced inverted question marks.

This is only because they do not understand the underlying principle involved. They strive to obtain a result from outward appearance without studying the cause.

In other paragraphs I have quite a little to say on the subject, but it may be pertinent here to define what to my mind are the reasons for the forward seat and its accompanying ramifications.

First: It places the weight on the horse where he is best able to carry it comfortably.

Second: It keeps the rider in balance so that he may as nearly as possible coördinate with the horse, which in turn enables him to control the horse more rapidly and more positively.

Third: By these very tokens it not only increases the factor of safety tremendously, but also adds to the comfort of mount and

man and enables both to give a better performance.

One of the most curious points encountered in talking with a great many riders is their very definite theories without foundation, literally without a leg to stand on, about the length of stirrup leathers. Many of them would have to be ballet dancers or slack-wire artists to have any balance with the long stirrup leathers which they advocate. I believe that this fallacy dates back to the Civil War and the popularity at that time in the U. S. of the McClellan saddle with the box stirrup and the long leather. The saddle horse in vogue, however, at that time was the single footer for which darning yarn would have done for leathers. The deservedly popular Kentucky spring seat saddle, especially designed for gaited horses and single footers, could be well ridden with a fairly long stirrup under proper gaits.

Most of these same theorists indulge in the

long, loose rein. Well, I always sigh a prayer of hope when I see them start out and one of thanksgiving upon their return alive. They may be entirely right, "I hae me doots," but they certainly do not look very secure, in an English saddle.

Frequently they maintain their attitude, not their position, by explaining that they really ride the "Western seat" and except with actual photographs or a visit to a Rodeo, it is impossible to convince them that actually a "Western rider" in a stock saddle uses a modified forward seat and often a short stirrup. It is the deep seat and high cantle of his saddle which at certain gaits, particularly canter, or in coming down grade give the appearance of the extra length of leather. In fact, though strongly in favor for all but Western riding of the English saddle, I must admit that a well-fitted stock saddle has the tendency to get one on balance and very closely approach the forward seat.

Due to the mechanical necessities of a roping saddle, the high horn requires the cowboy to ride with his hand high and almost entirely with the left hand only. This accounts for the loose rein, which unfortunately has to be compensated for by the more severe bit.

Some day a happy genius will delight our hearts by designing a good-looking saddle for the forward seat combining the advantages of the stock and English varieties. It can be done. Martin & Martin are already making a deep seated polo saddle which if it had a cut back tree would approximate this ideal. The Saumur pattern is probably the forerunner of this type of saddle. However, as expressed in another chapter, do not expect a bit to offset the fact that one has heavy hands, and whether one prefers a deep seated or a flat saddle is only a question of personal choice or individual requirement. The main point is that the English saddle is all right.

It is up to us to ride it well. A level foot, a well-pointed knee, a forward seat, constant but light contact between the rider's hands and the horse's mouth, and balance will give the average rider greater security and more pleasure and the horse a chance to enjoy himself as well. But be sure of balance and find the right length of stirrup leather, and your own individual place in the saddle to establish it. Then, when you are quite sure you have it, begin again and make sure.

None of us can learn to ride from reading a book, but we can often discover what to strive for. Be at home in the saddle and take good care of your horse.

From close observation of a large number of fairly good riders coming from different parts of the country within the last few years, it is evident that the commonest fault is that the average rider's seat is far too dependent upon his hands. Make your seat as nearly as possible independent of your hands. Even

your seat is one of your aids to the horse through knee pressure, heel, and shifting of balance. If your position is correct, if your balance is assured and the danger of jabbing your horse's mouth is eliminated, your hands are left free for the management of your mount. The quickest way to obtain these results is to ride without reins, having someone in whom you have implicit confidence leading your horse at all gaits. This can even be done to marked advantage over low jumps. Put your arms in different positions, hands on your hips, arms over your head, fold your arms, and it is surprising how quickly you will find your proper place in the saddle.

“The place for your eyes is between the horse's ears.” This is parallel to the old coxswain's command to a star-gazing oarsman: “Eyes in the boat.” With “Eyes between the Ears” you can see where you're going, avoid branches, protect your mount's footing and anticipate his moods, and fears.

“HAPPY DAYS”

To many a boy and girl the companionship of a horse, be it pony or a semi-pensioned hunter of discernment and benevolence, means more than all the other playmates. With some of the more fortunate, childhood's happiness is built around an enchanted triumvirate: one's self, one's horse and one's dog. Never such perfect understanding can exist among mere human beings. Not only does it develop courage, patience, kindness, but early riding builds sturdy muscles which stand us in good stead through many a trying siege and add years to our lives. But the happy days in the saddle are fond recollections and the love of the boyhood pony is a cherished sentiment until old age.

So I feel that some of our most respected authorities who advise against teaching the children to ride are just a wee bit selfish. From a military standpoint the young soldier

entirely green may make a better rider in a shorter time, judged by certain standards, but think of the fun he has missed. Let us not be too plague-take-it efficient and let's give the youngsters their day. Besides, there are a whole lot of Fathers and Mothers just as capable of teaching their children horsemanship as most cavalry instructors are of teaching the male offspring of military age.

The only value of the smaller sized ponies is that they are near the ground and mostly stubborn. Hence, it is not far to fall and serious hurts are extremely infrequent. This helps establish confidence. Their stubbornness develops patience and resourcefulness in gaining the necessary control. However, just as soon as the young rider appears to outgrow the pony,¹ get him "more horse" and repeat when needed. Otherwise, not only carelessness, but retarded development in horsemanship.

¹ In using the term pony I did not feel, until taken to task, that it was necessary to explain that this class did not include bangle charms and pocket editions, in other words, ponies too small to be of practical value.

ship will result. It is an excellent thing to ride along with the children once or twice a week and check up progress and make suggestions.

Quiet admonitions, such as: "hands down," "knees in," "heels down," "elbows in," "forward," "closer contact," and many other similar phrases will help to keep the young rider up to form and insure the niceties of the road and field.

You may also find that you will be guided by the same ideas which you are giving the young 'uns. Unconsciously you will begin to spruce up a bit. And we are never too old to learn, nor too young.

FOLLOWING A LEAD

Often as not in riding as in anything else the experienced can learn a good deal from watching the mistakes of the novice. And do not ignore the fact that the tyro has not

the “exclusive” on making mistakes. The most difficult person to help is the individual who tells us that he has ridden all his life, but just wants to brush up a bit. If he has ridden all his life, he is often like a spoiled horse, his cussedness is just ground in. Included in this group is the rider who has early in life deservedly gained the reputation of being “good” and who is not unappreciative of his ability and becomes careless and neglects form. Even though he has invited criticism he resents as an impertinence anything but unqualified praise.

The next hardest to cope with is the young man or woman whom you have succeeded in teaching a little and who thinks he knows it all, forgetting that it was you who taught them, and that you must know a little more if you were able to teach them so much. These are exasperating ingrates and you should shoot them in the leg, and buy them a crutch, so that they could never ride again, yes never.

There has been many a bold rider, keen and clean, and a straight goer, who has come a cropper because he has more valor than discretion and did not know his country and his horse. Naturally this is oftener the case in the hunting field than on the road or larking, but a bit of caution is not amiss even in the less strenuous instances.

Even though you are an "old hand" it is wise not to try to show the way over unknown country. It is better to curb ambition and follow one of the natives who "knows the way and gets there." You may know a lot about your own country, but he also knows his, and if you keep out of his way and do not crowd him he will not resent your following a lead. In fact, if you have a good reputation in your own parts and he knows it, he will probably gladly accept your judgement as a graceful compliment.

Many years ago, in a snake fence country, on a good true horse following a pack of

“houn’ dawgs” it was my undoing to try to “show ’em the way.” My horse knew far more about snake fences than I ever will, but I insisted that my judgement was better than his and great was the fall thereof—both of us and my judgement, too.

Whether larking or hunting, let the host set the pace anyway until you know the neighborhood.

If you are changing your season’s activities, a first rate way to learn the country and the disposition of the master and huntsman and the ability of the whips, is to do a little cubbing.

Even road riding it is well not to let your horse extend himself, until you know the road. I have witnessed some close shaves and some hard spills which might easily have been avoided.

And still another precaution for the good of your horse’s legs and your own neck, when galloping a pasture in a woodchuck country,

ride the gullies where it is damp, as old Mr. and Mrs. Chuck do not dig in where the cellar may be wet.

And a good way to get through a wind fall or a bog is to go round it.

If it is so icy and snowy that your mount needs toe caulks in back and all around in front, work him slowly round the drive or up and down the paddock and when you want to go somewhere take the car with skid chains, and if the snow is too deep take down the old snowshoes and “have at it.”

It is not my belief to coddle a horse, but why, for a day's riding, cut a quarter or even a tendon?

Don't buy a horse that you can't ride, and don't ride a horse that you can't buy. The last part of which may need explanation—but there is an old country saying: “A hired horse has hard hoofs,” and many of those who have loaned horses would be glad to subscribe to

an addenda: “and borrowed ones have harder.”

So with all the kindness in the world, if a friend has “a horse that money could not buy”—the friend, not you, is the only man to ride him.



ELEMENTARY JUMPING

SOMETIMES questions are asked that are facers, and one recently asked me prompts a chapter. A friend recently purchased a very young horse through me. After schooling him a short time I turned him over. When I took the horse he had never been ridden. He is a youngster of great promise, well bred, biddable, gentle, strong and good looking. His owner wants him to jump—he will. He is the type that will do anything you teach him, and gladly. My caution prompted my saying “Take him easy, work him into it slowly, not too much nor too high

at the beginning. He is a young horse, don't crock him." Then came the big question, "Well, how high?" My first reply was, "Use your judgement, no more than he can go over easily, and like it. Homeopathic doses—small and frequent."

Again the question, "But how high should he jump? As a horseman what, in your opinion, should he do?" Now in such a case my opinion would only be found after actually working with the horse but here a definite answer was required, so with a factor of safety uppermost in mind I said, "Thirty inches until I see him again in a month or so."

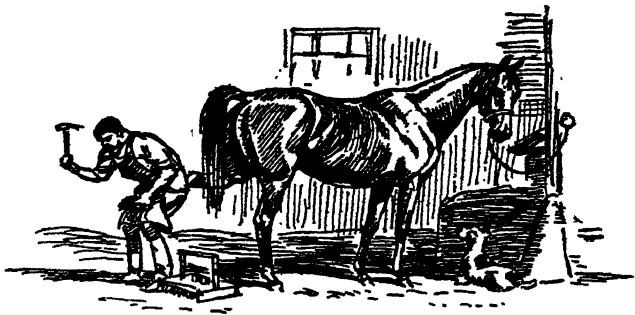
Here is the underlying reason. He is young. Joints and hoofs and head must accustom themselves gradually to a new group of movements. Too much effort would result in stiffness which in turn would make the horse timid at the jump. In order to save his stiffened muscles he will balk, refuse or rear, bad habits more easily avoided than cor-

rected. For this reason it is always unwise to force a horse over jumps in schooling. Almost always bad manners can be traced to faulty training. He is young—a hitherto unused set of muscles must be brought into use and developed through light exercise and the activity increased with the strengthening and growth of these muscles. Rushing and quick turns, raps and heavy landing must all be avoided as in their wakes follow spavin, splint, bowed tendons and a thousand other ills that flesh is heir to. Then, too, he must learn to time his take off and change his stride when necessary.

If, after the first day's efforts, a horse shows a little stiffness or fear of the bars, let him step over or even walk over and then give him a little light work around the paddock, and keep him away from the jumps. Do not flog him over. Take him in, cool him out, rub him down in front and in back, above and below, with a mild liniment (Ellimans and

• GOOD RIDING •

Absorbine are both good), and ten to one he will take the bars first time off the next day. Try it and see, and do not try to make a jumper too quickly especially if he is five or under. There is plenty of time.



HORSEMANSHIP

POSSIBLY many of us have been burning incense to false gods; but, in some cases for generations, it has not been enough to have been good riders or expert whips, but with either of these or both it was still necessary to combine horsemanship. The terms are not synonymous nor even inclusive. There are many crack polo players, who are daring and skillful riders, who are not competent to care for a horse. In their specialty they are superb, but in many cases not horsemen. Again, there are hunting men who ride for the sport, the thrill, the fencing, and the kill,—outstanding riders; but if they had to

cool, bandage, bed and feed their mounts for ten days' hunting and possibly advise on a change of shoes, or place one, they would spend half the period in their libraries reading up on what and what not to do. A conspicuous case comes to mind of an old timer who was only a driver. No better man drew rein over a single or pair of road hackneys. His appointments were perfect, his hand was blessed with consummate skill, his ability to get the best out of hackneys on the road,—he seldom drove on the tanbark, was uncanny—but he could not have told a green groom how to cool them out nor when to feed them. He was a perfect whip but lacked horsemanship.

On the other hand there are lots of horsemen who know horses from many angles who make a poor showing on a box, and a worse one in the saddle.

A rider's classification cannot invariably be determined by the way in which he mounts. The manner in which he approaches a horse,

the ease and confidence, or lack of it, with which he picks up his reins, the positiveness with which he thrusts his foot into the stirrup, all proclaim the rider. But a good rider can do all these things perfectly and still show in the next few minutes that he is an indifferent horseman. Instead of taking his mount slowly and carefully for the first mile, he will right at the start break him into a fast trot or canter. Now the first mile out and the last mile in are important factors in a horse's comfort, performance and well-being. He will do infinitely better either on the road or in the field if he is walked for a little distance and then jogged a bit before letting him take the faster gaits. If he has not soiled before starting, it is well to let him do so before he is allowed to gallop. A horse that you are riding every day learns and soon becomes regular in his habits in this respect.

The last mile in is also quite worthy of consideration, as bringing him in quiet

and cool is a “consummation devoutly to be wished.” This avoids barn sweating with the subsequent danger of chilling. Many a conscientious groom has been “guilty” of putting a horse away apparently cool. Ten minutes after the horse has broken out in a vigorous sweat. If anything happens the groom is usually blamed, whereas the rider is at fault as he brought the horse in on the edge of a sweat, better to have brought him in really hot, so that he might have been properly cooled out.

It is an almost universally established fact that this is an age of highly specialized endeavor. We get something queer in our inners and the family doctor, with our interests uppermost in his mind, bundles us off to a diagnostician who finds out that we have several well defined causes, each one contributing directly or indirectly to our ailment. He, in turn, sends us to the dentist for our teeth, the chiropodist for fallen arches, and the serum

specialist for inoculations against hay fever or any one of a million or so other diseases. The charges are high, the bills come in fast and furious—but we are soon well and have saved time and money in the end. By the same token, when your horse is really sick, get the best veterinary available and, in the vernacular, “make it snappy.”

If we are jacks of all trades, the rest is a pre-ordained conclusion. A trotting horseman would be lost in a hunting stable and vice versa. But there are certain rudiments of horsemanship shared mutually and in common with those others who devote their lives to the care, training and conditioning of runners and polo horses.

Horsemanship is an absorbingly interesting study and, whereas experience is as usual the best teacher, books and discussion are often good guides and enable a man more importantly occupied to acquire much of the theory which can rapidly be put into practice

when the necessity or the desire may arise. Furthermore, this knowledge enables one to feel sure that one's animals are being properly cared for. Talk to your men, they will repay you not only with information but added interest, especially if they discover that you have some horse sense and are anxious to add to it.

Suppose that you have a stable of top hole hunters or a string of polo ponies and an active, able head man with two or three young grooms. Right at the height of the hunting season, when your horses have to be on their legs, or in tournament week, when every pony is needed, your top man gets badly kicked and is rushed off to the hospital. If you pick one of the boys to carry on, the other two may feel hurt and sulk a bit and things will go wrong. At such times it is almost impossible to get a good man, especially upon a temporary basis, and besides, you do not want to replace a trusted and faithful employee. Moreover, a new first man is pretty sure to

make trouble in camp, and at such a time the best is none too good. However, you could have a lot of fun and keep things going smoothly and keep everybody happy if you could step in and with a "heave ho, my hardies, let's see if we can't pull together. I'll do my part. Hard luck our friend had to go to the hospital but my doctor, who is looking after him, says he'll soon be up and about again." And then quietly direct operations, watch what is done and do a bit yourself. When they realize that you know that each one of the horses must have bedding to be comfortable in a loose box, and other little matters of routine, things will all be well. It is parallel to the yachtsman who can take the wheel in a bad storm and intelligently direct his sailors in shortening sail and battening down the hatches. It is the same in business when, in an emergency, the "big chief" can take a hand in the details and prove to the force that he does know his business.

Aside from the possibility of an occasion arising which may make it expedient to know something of the horse after the saddle is removed, you will find that it will increase your understanding of the animal, will keep your stable running better, and will infinitely increase your pleasure in your rides whether they be jogging along the highways and byways, or following the white willow, or pursuing the cunning Reynard to his lair.

Without advocating a dispensary in the tackle room, it does occur to me that a word upon a few simple remedies for casual ills is pertinent in a chapter on horsemanship. Do not accuse me of advertising any brands if, in some cases, I mention names, as it is done entirely without the knowledge, consent nor financial appreciation of the manufacturers. Perhaps the easiest way in which to emphasize the advantages of the medicine closet is to recount an extreme case of having nothing on hand.

One very cold night in the Adirondacks when the snow was piled up like waves in a storm, I came home about nine-thirty and stopped in to see my mare on the way to the house to make sure she was comfortable for the night. She was not. In fact, she was in distress with a first rate case of colic. I pushed on over to the house as fast as my snow shoes would carry me and telephoned the veterinary. He was down with tonsilitis but suggested various remedies over the telephone, none of which I had nor could obtain without loss of valuable time. Finally, by elimination, we decided on hot water with aromatic spirits of ammonia and bicarbonate of soda, lots of it. Getting my ingredients together in a long necked bottle, I made for the barn again. She was still on her feet and bloated. Well, the fun began. No one to help me, only a barn lantern for light, and a ten by twelve box stall with about a foot of shavings on the floor. It was the real

“battle of the century.” None recorded of the “twenty-four foot squared circle” in Madison Square or elsewhere, compared either in fighting or in aggressiveness. It was catch as catch can, and the poor old Marquis of Queensbury must have turned over many times in his grave. At the end of fifteen minutes, both the mare and I were definitely and defyingly belligerent. At the end of an hour and a half we were somewhat jaded. However, the medicine was down. She was well on the road to recovery from the colic—but she had had enough exercise for a week and I for a month. Whether our emergency concoction or the general mauling worked the cure, we shall never know—but a rubber bottle or a syringe with someone to help is the better way. All of this might also have been prevented if she had not been out that day and indulged in some frozen forage. It is a good thing, when letting a horse out in the paddock in the late autumn and early spring

when herbage is frost bitten, to muzzle him, as he will frequently browse on bits of grass and leaves which cause trouble.

To relieve colic in early stage a good mixture is: one pint Raw Linseed Oil, one ounce Turpentine. This is primarily a laxative and I have found it satisfactory. Whiskey and hot water, as a stimulant mostly whiskey, is good. There are a number of "colic cures" on the market but it is best to have your veterinary mix one for you and always have plenty on hand.

Tip the head up gently and hold the tongue out on one side of the mouth. This keeps the mouth open. If he is fidgety or frightened, fold down one ear and hold it firmly. This produces a numbing sensation which is quieting and is far better than the "twitch" which is at best a rather clumsy affair, but in extreme cases necessary. Then with a syringe or a rubber bottle, according to the size of the dose, shoot the liquid as far back into

his throat as possible. Keep his head up and, beginning at the top of the throat, stroke it downward with your hand. This starts the swallowing and all is well.

When a horse is definitely opposed to taking medicine, take a rope and make a short loop with a bowline or other hard knot which will not slip. Place this in his mouth and over his nose. Pass the end of the rope through a ring in the ceiling or over a beam and raise his head well up. Then you can work without hurting him and can in most cases get the dose down. Lacking a long rope use a short sling and with a stable fork at the end of sling thrust his head upward into position. This is a poor substitute as it is nearly impossible to keep the head steady—but I have had to resort to it upon occasion.

Sometimes a cough is serious, but often is due only to some irritation caused by a slight cold or pollen or dust. In such a case a little ordinary kerosene sprayed down the throat

every few hours will often relieve the condition and check its progress toward dangerous illness. I have used the following prescription with satisfactory results. Extract Belladonna 3 drams, Fluid Extract Lobelia 3 ounces, Dilute Hydrocyanic Acid 1 dram, Oil of Tar 1 ounce, Oil of Camphor 1 ounce,—simple syrup enough to make 12 ounces gross, Dose 1 ounce. However, if the cough persists, be on the safe side and call in the doctor.

Minor ills in horses as in human beings frequently yield to first aid, but when they do not there is only one sensible thing to do, i.e., get expert, professional advice; and the best is none too good. If there is any indication of influenza or distemper, isolate the animal immediately with lots of fresh air. Keep him well blanketed, give plenty of water, very light food if any, until the veterinary arrives, and keep the bowels open with castor oil or a physic ball. Many of the old timers swear by the latter, but it is a little harsh. Better

still would be a mixture well shaken of one quart of raw linseed with one ounce of chemist's turpentine. This should be split into two doses unless the case is extreme. This same mixture is often efficacious for colic in its early stages before a stimulant might be required and is safe even though the diagnosis may be faulty because its principal function is to clear the intestinal tract and stimulate elimination. Although this is not a common remedy, it is one which was years ago recommended by one of the best veterinary schools in the country. Distemper is a plague only equalled by flu. I remember once that in our home stable we had just bought a new pair of hackneys after they had won at the famous old Wissahickon Heights Show outside of Philadelphia. One of them developed distemper which went right through the barn laying low one other hackney, a Kentucky coach horse, three road horses, and three saddle horses. They all recovered due to the

constant and intelligent care of our old colored man, William Robinson, and his two grooms; and he never had the doctor. However, it was an old story to him. He knew what to do and how to do it. He was a rare horseman.

Lameness is almost always due to some specific cause, and the first thing is to determine the cause and next to ascertain accurately just where the horse is lame. It is a simple matter to spot which leg, but sometimes difficult to definitely locate the exact part. If he has a sprained fetlock, it will not do one bit of good to blister his shoulder. Furthermore, beware of blisters and firing anyway, and only let the veterinary do it after careful consideration. It may be in his feet, or pastern, fetlock, or tendon, a splint or a bad knee or shoulder, or hock or stifle or hip or somewhere in between. On the other hand, it may just be a touch of stiffness due to stand-

ing in a draft or as a result of some unusual exercise.

If in the fetlock, tendon, hock or shoulder, it is serious. In the fetlock it is usually a wrench or a sprain. Do not ride him—but as soon as he shows a little improvement, let him move around on it if he will in a small paddock with no other horses. Compresses very hot or very cold will help, but rubbing with a good liniment or embrocation with careful bandaging is better.

If apparently in the tendons, run your fingers down each side of the shank to make sure that the real cause is not a splint. A saddle horse especially is more apt to have trouble in this way in front than rear. A splint caught in time can often be cured by an old fashioned sweat blister, which is hardly a blister at all. There are numerous proprietary preparations which are good if the trouble has not gone too far. Sometimes a horse, particularly in a dry climate, will go

sound for years with a splint, and begin to favor with a sudden change of locality where he is subjected to dampness. If the splint is any size C. T. V.¹; if you are positive it is in the tendons, bathing, soaking, rubbing, bandaging are all in order, but C. T. V. Look to the length of the hoofs. If at the hock joint, have a care. Bog spavin, which is a large spongy type of spavin is at once obvious and extremely disfiguring, and although I have heard excellent horsemen discuss its derivation and exact nature, I am free to admit I do not know anything about it and therefore would hesitate to make any suggestions except that it is an oversecretion of the fluid which lubricates the hock joint. The ordinary spavin, curb and thoropin is bad enough and often difficult to detect in its early stages. That these may come from a strain is possible but there may be other contributory causes. Any kind of spavin is far too important for

¹ C. T. V.—Call the Veterinary.

any but professional treatment and if you even suspect its presence, get the very best veterinary possible. Many a fine horse has been ruined not only from amateur efforts but even by the work of otherwise good veterinarians unskilled in the treatment of this trouble.

Many horsemen have a holy horror of shoulder lameness, and often through over-apprehension falsely diagnose a case of favoring in front by attributing it to the shoulder. As a matter of fact, the joint here is larger and stronger in comparison to the others of the leg and is well fortified with heavy muscles. Do not be misled that shoulder trouble is rare; it is not: but I firmly believe that the reason so many stubborn cases occur is that through faulty diagnosis the shoulder is often treated for trouble emanating from another source. A good liniment with frequent rubbing and massage will usually work wonders if the soreness is really in the shoulder. However if

there is no response to this treatment—call the veterinary.

It would be impossible for a layman to intelligently list “the thousand ills that flesh is heir to” or to indicate treatment, but there are so many little maladies that can be prevented by observation or cured in the early stages that perhaps our good friends the veterinaries will not regard these remarks as trespassing. Most of the good ones would rather not be called for the unimportant ills, as their time is too much in demand looking after really serious cases.

Occasionally it is a good idea to pick up your horse's feet and smell them. If you notice a very bad odor it is usually thrush. However do not fail to look at the frog and make sure that it is in a healthy condition, clean, neither spongy nor too brittle. A good horse shoer can usually remove a thrush without danger; and, supplementing his work, a little formaldehyde on some absorbent cotton

placed in the incision will work wonders. However, if it is far advanced it is again a case for a veterinary.

Founder or laminitis are not so frequently heard of nowadays, largely because horses brought in hot are more intelligently cared for and diet rations receive greater consideration, and because, with automobiles and other forms of rapid transportation and communication, the necessity of overtaxing a horse on the road is practically eliminated. In buying a horse never be induced to take one that shows that he has been foundered; and he will usually show it, not only in dropped or flattened hoofs (with lateral ridges very easy to distinguish, especially forward) but by resting the member by leaning on the heels.

Founder is generally divided into three classes: road, feed-box, and water or chill. Road founder is almost a misnomer as most authorities concede that founder is usually due to diet and that certain foods in too great



Gray Dawn,—sound, game, well bred; showing the first position of the mount and cheeking.

quantities render the horse susceptible to the disease which may be aggravated by overheating with subsequent chill or being overtaxed in his work. Founder may be caused by neglecting to cool a horse properly or feeding heavily before the animal is thoroughly cooled. Founder can be somewhat relieved, but the only cure is to prevent it with careful diet and routine.

Sore back is an abomination. A day's rest in time will save nine. Do not trust entirely to the groom, but when you come in from a ride and the saddle is removed, look over your mount's back and run your hand along his spine from the withers to the loins. Also be constantly on the lookout for girth scalds. A little Ichthyol Ointment morning and night for either of these abrasions is excellent, so is Ungentine, but the former is a little more positive in its action. If you must ride a horse with a sore back, the following precaution may enable you to do so without increas-

ing the injury. First, put the ointment on the sore and cover it with some medicated lamb's wool, not absorbent cotton, which is a misnomer. Let the wool extend well beyond the area of the wound. Paint over the wool with collodium, then take a heavy felt sweat pad and cut a hole in it large enough so that it just does not touch the wool. Place the saddle carefully in position and girth snugly. In removing the cocoon, use warm water to soften up the collodium or a little grain alcohol so as not to pull the hairs. So called tanning a horse's back does not always overcome tenderness, and when it exists it is a good plan to use a sheepskin pad with the wool on, and have it fitted to the horse's back. It is an easy thing to do, only requiring a little patience. Take two pieces and fit them along the spine to get the curve. After establishing this curve, cut each piece to match and baste them together. Then, on the leather side, stitch a strap either of very thin

leather or heavy linen tape. Lay this in position on the horse's back, put the saddle on and girth it. Take a soft lead pencil or crayon, and run it around the edge of the saddle. Remove the saddle and sheepskin and cut out on the marked line. This will give you a first rate and inconspicuous saddle pad. To insure keeping it always in position, stitch a keeper strap on each panel to fold back from in front for the girth to go through.

In the case of girth scalds follow the same procedure except as regards the felt, using sheepskin with straps to keep it in place; and it is better at these times to run it the full length where the girth comes in contact with the horse's body. However, it is far better if possible, to let the horse stand for a day or two when the sores are first discovered, and after either washing out with a good antiseptic solution or an application of iodine, to use one of the ointments as already described.

Shoe boil is a wholly unnecessary blemish. A horse receiving daily care should never develop one. At the very first evidence of this condition, purchase a shoe boil boot. There are numerous absorbines and one of them applied as directed together with the boot should check any enlargement at the elbow. If you persevere you will, in a comparatively short time, reduce it to normal. This suggests an article about capped hocks and how to cure them that I read in a book published nearly one hundred years ago. It said to keep two strong men always applying very hot compresses under all the pressure of their hands for twenty-four hours. It went on to say that the two men should be relieved at the end of an hour and two more fresh ones introduced, and so on. Page the Horse Marines and a couple of kegs of Guinness Stout to keep them happy. However, the main thing is to find out upon what the horse is rapping his hock and either pad that or pad the hock, and

meantime diligently work to reduce the swelling first under the advice of the doctor and if nothing happens try Absorbine and baking as for water on the knee.

Worms can readily be detected and easily eradicated. Their presence in manure is proof positive. They are no respecters of age but usually are the bane of the fairly young or the ancient and honorable. Any good vermifuge should be sufficient, but if chronic C. T. V.

There are numberless other conditions of wind, limb and inners. So many, in fact, that these few hints seem futile, but they will serve to good purpose if they emphasize the importance of prevention and the necessity of immediate professional advice and treatment. However, before getting on to another subject, a bit of a yarn upon amateur diagnosis may not be amiss. I was visiting a parson, living in a famous hunting section, over the week-end and so, of course, went to church.

After service I saw an acquaintance, a famous old trainer who had once been a sergeant in Kitchener's renowned Camel Corps in the Soudan, and was with that great soldier and "fighting Mac," Hector Macdonald, at Khartoum. We joined forces and were walking up the road when we noticed several men and grooms standing around a fine big heavy-weight hunter. The owner of the horse, a man famous cross country and widely known as a straight rider who flew all his jumps, beckoned my companion to join the group. I tagged along.

"We have a sick horse here," said the owner.

"What do you think the trouble is?" said the trainer.

"Well, I don't know exactly. He ought to be all right, he's been eating his head off for a week and when I took him out for a gallop this morning he certainly was feeling his oats.

He's gone wrong. I've sent for the Vet. I think he has stifles."

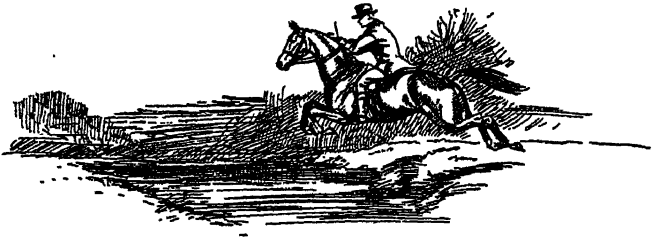
The old sergeant looked at me and said, "What do you think?"

I said: "I know he has stifles, but I think he is feeling his oats and has what we farmers call black water." He winked and smiled. "Get some straw," said he. "And a couple of blankets," said I.

Well, we led him over the straw with the faint hope that he might succeed in passing some water, but that failing we kept him on his feet and moving with the blankets on until the veterinary arrived. He immediately gave him medicine to clear his intestines, stimulate his kidneys and produce a sweat. The veterinary knew his business but would never do for our diplomatic representative to the Court of St. James.

"Has stifles, hasn't he?" said the owner.

"Yes," said the veterinary, "and a couple of hocks, too."



OBSERVATION

ALWAYS know the sex of the horse you are riding. Geldings on a long ride should be rested occasionally to give them an opportunity to void. It is a good plan to dismount, loosen the girths, and if there is some dry grass or leaves, let him stand over them for a minute. Sometimes halting near a running brook will prompt him to do his duty. Mares can go longer and if walking will often stop. It is an added relief to them, too, to dismount and loosen girths, but they are much more sensible in answering the demands of nature.

Another consideration in this respect is to notice if a mare is in season, and if she is, ride her carefully and do not overtax her but

rather let her set her own pace and keep her quiet. Do not ride her in company. When she stops of her own volition, lean well forward over her withers so as to take the weight off her back.

Years ago, before they organized a pack of hounds at Southampton, there used to be rare sport riding paper chases. Fathers and mothers and all the children took part. However the meets became more than a family affair as new rules of the game were gradually developed. Finally it worked out that the two riders laying the track kept spreading paper until it was exhausted, and left their bags on a bush or scrub oak. This was the end of the run for the impedimenta and the first there captured the brush, in this case the bags; but for the young blades, well mounted, this was only the beginning of the serious sport, for then it was a point to point race to the main entrance gate of James L. Breese's former residence, the beautiful Orchard, in-

ternationally known for its delightful hospitality. Some of these races were "hell for leather" and keenly contested. There often were half and three-quarter bred with occasionally a thoroughbred. Frequently in the field would be good fast hunters and always a large quota of fast, nimble polo ponies. Three or four miles hard going after a paper chase, over the trappy Shinnecock hills, was quite a test for horse and man.

Well, we planned a "big day" and had let it be known that we would welcome all comers, a free for all, sweepstake or what you will.

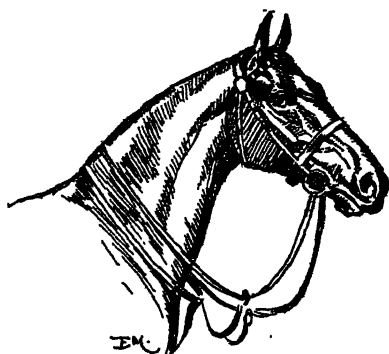
Every available horse in Southampton and Easthampton was pressed into service for the "big event." That is, all except one. Martin Aylward still had unchartered an able veteran of many a hard fought campaign, The Duke of Durham.

A friend of mine who was an inexperienced rider and nothing of a horseman, still re-

mained unmounted, and Martin suggested "His Grace." "No, no," said my friend timidly, "I could not ride a horse with a name like that. Why, he sounds like a race horse." I caught Martin's eye and felt sure that he would understand. "How about Queenie?" said I. "Yes," said my friend "I could ride her all right. She sounds nice and quiet." "Yes, sir, strictly mid-Victorian," replied Martin. Well of course the "Duke of Durham" was led out late under the *nom de chasse* of "Queenie." My friend was hustled into the saddle before he had a chance to know whether he had a leg up on a buffalo or a camel, and away we went. Queenie was just well warmed up by the time we found the bags and on the race in took matters in her, or rather his, own control and set the running, leaping the sunken roads and scrub brush in his bee line as though he were jumping bundles of straw for his dinner. In fact, had it not been for an unusual amount of

talent and some younger lungs and legs which could stay longer, His Grace, The Duke of Durham, even with a novice up, would certainly have run for place or show if not to win. However, there was that splendid sportsman the late August Belmont, Jr., on a young race horse, David Dows on one of his first imported Irish hunters, and Major Williams on a very racy small thoroughbred, and your humble scribe on a rare treat, that game little horse of Bob Oliphant's. Well it was hard luck that His Grace, The Duke did not have a more experienced pilot to have saved his speed for the last half mile, but anyway my friend rode the ride of his life, and retired from racing.

By dinner, the story of "Queenie" and the "Duke of Durham" had gone the rounds and when the champagne was served, we all got upon our feet and solemnly pledged "His Grace" for his splendid run in a lusty toast with bottoms up.



DIGRESSION

“**T**IME cannot change nor custom stale.”

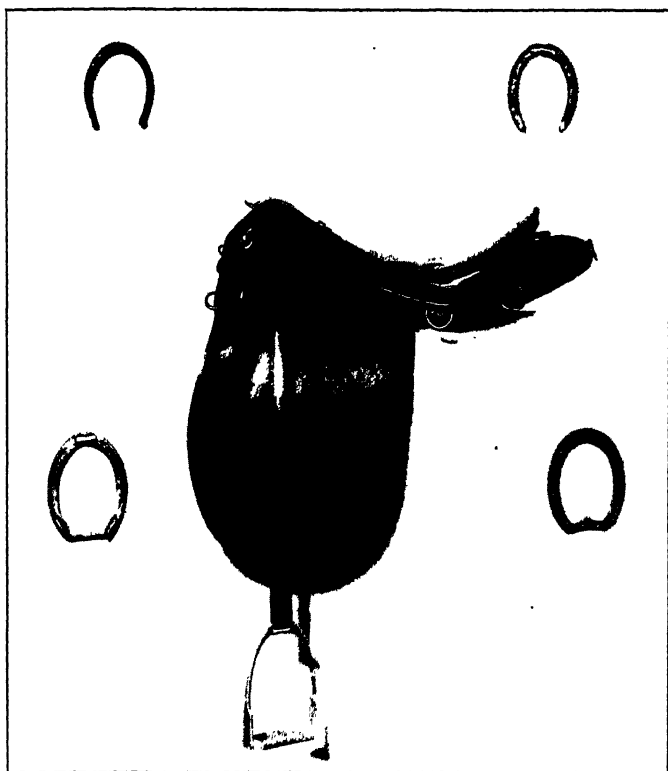
Back in 1908, more than a score of years ago and some several years earlier, we heard a great deal of talk and read many newspaper and magazine articles and editorials about the “horseless age.” It is a little like the Englishman recently visiting our country who asked when the “Eighteenth Amendment” would go into effect. Today no Sunday supplement is complete without photographs of the jumpers at one of the horse shows, racing at Saratoga or Belmont, or polo at Sands Point, Meadowbrook, Rock-

away or one of a hundred other fields where rattling good games are played almost daily. In season, the magazines feature articles on hunting, polo, and steeplechasing.

The automobile news of a generation ago is relegated to Monday morning's list of casualties which occurred over the week-end and licenses revoked. Now, even the motor car manufacturers play up the saddle horse in their best planned advertisements and the car is incidental, a means of conveyance from home to the polo match, the races, the horse show or the meet. The motor is not to be deprecated. It has been a tremendous boon to the horse in relieving him of much of the drudgery of life. The coach and four in some sections is slowly reappearing, but it can only hold its own as a sporting accessory. But everyone should welcome its revival and encourage its perpetuation. Ice companies, milk distributors, department stores and the express companies, from hard, cold statistics,

hāve learned that the horse is more efficient than the motor for certain kinds of delivery work. The farmers who sold their grade-work teams to buy tractors are still using tractors but are also buying pure and half bred Percherons, Belgians and Shires to do work unsuitable for the motor. A prominent horse dealer told me only a few days ago that there is again a demand for the light draft. City users are finding that the smaller horse is more serviceable in traffic. He said that this is especially true in New York City. There is necessity for both. Our mule population in 1900 was something less than 500,000, in 1920 a little over 2,000,000 and still increasing. Cincinnati has 120 miles of bridle path. A volunteer organization in New York State has, at current writing, in excess of 1200 miles of roads suitable for saddle horses already chartered. Around Rye and Greenwich there already exist sixty-eight miles of bridle paths and the mileage is being

increased rapidly. In and about Far Hills, Bernardsville, Gladstone and Peapack, through the generosity of the land owners, large and small strips of turf along the highways and brooks and through the woodlands have been set aside for the use of riders. The Rollins' of New Hampshire have miles and miles on their own properties and have even purchased an old trolley line right of way which they have converted into a saddle road. The New Hampshire Horse Association is charting miles upon miles of dirt and semi-deserted roads, publishing road maps and bulletins telling where reliable blacksmiths, good stabling, veterinaries and inns are located. They are even posting these routes with suitable metal signs, similar in appearance to automobile license plates. They are encouraging the foundation of affiliated local organizations. The whole state is districted and district secretaries are being appointed. The



Upper left: Argentine pony's shoe (rear).

Upper right: Front Shoe: three-quarter thoroughbred, one-quarter Morgan mare.

Lower left: Bar shoe (front) with worn calks for ice.

Lower right: Hand-made bar shoe.

The saddle, originally British officer's type, now largely used by officers of other countries, also by many civilians for country riding where comfort and convenience are important. The rings carry blanket rolls, saddlebags, cameras, or what you will. Extension underpads distribute weight and ease the burden.

cost of membership is nominal and persons from without the state are eligible.

These are only a few instances which have come to my personal knowledge. There are hundreds of others in all parts of the country, and why should we not have a national organization with state chapters to work for bridle paths and post-and-rail panels in the wire fences?

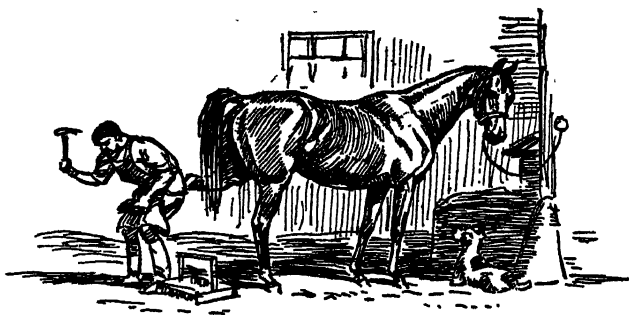
Upon a recent visit to Washington, D. C., I was taken to one riding club which stabled 160 head, to another establishment only a few blocks away of 60 head and a private boarding stable of 30. Upon noting my enthusiasm, my host told me there were numerous others, some even larger than the first mentioned. Pause for a moment to consider what important enterprises Saratoga and Belmont Park are today, not to mention many other famous meetings. Think of the thousands of intelligent persons interested in racing as a sport, not as a speculation. Look at

polo, not necessarily International—but just good polo. Think of the thousands of persons all over the country who enjoy the game, and can follow it with an appreciative knowledge of what it's all about, who have never had a mallet in their hands. Take "Farmer's Day" at the Autumn Steeple Chase meeting on the Schley place at Far Hills, New Jersey. It is a revelation. Racing, polo and hunting make their appeal to all classes. They promote good feeling between different circles whose circumferences otherwise would never have been even tangent, to say nothing of intersecting. The saddle horse, in his various phases is not only still king of sports but a social institution. Amateurs and professionals each have their following. To the man in the street, Thomas Hitchcock, Jr., Esq., is Tommy Hitchcock, beloved by thousands who can only afford to read of his prowess with the mallet. Earl Sande is known to millions as a famous jockey and is every-

where admired and respected as an outstanding sportsman.

Then, too, the horse crowd is generous in its applause. If the English or the Army in India, or the Argentine win a series, or a match, or if Lewis Lacey can ride off the brilliant Hopping and by his extraordinary deftness capture the ball and run away with it for a goal, the stands roar their delight and the American Big Four does not feel too bad about it either. "It was a great run and a wonderful shot. Lacey's a marvel!"

You can still be a "gentleman jockey" and ride steeplechases even if you do get thirteen dollars a week writing racing news for one of the New York newspapers. One might even sell a pony or a hunter or two and still retain his "amateur rating."



EQUIPMENT

YEARS ago a very dear friend brought on from his ranch in the Southwest a string of ponies which he had trained for polo. They were all fast, keen, hardy horses, for the most part young, and almost all of them unusually showy. There was one however, a little strawberry roan named "Buttons" which he had brought along not to enhance the beauty of his string but because he was a good old standby who had made an enviable reputation in a country of good horses as a cut out pony. Buttons was not young but he carried his age well. He was fast and fearless and would success-

• EQUIPMENT •

fully ride off a horse many pounds heavier.

As time went on and Buttons was dressed up for the game with English saddle, standing martingale, double headstall and polo shin-boots he began to get obstreperous and riding onto the field for a chucker or off between the periods was inclined to crowhop a bit, somewhat to his owner's discomfort. I watched him with increasing interest, as although I knew that his owner was entirely capable of "staying by" him in a Western stock saddle, I felt that some day he might find it embarrassing in a polo saddle. This day came sooner than I anticipated and Buttons put on a rather tame private rodeo going on the field, but on the way to the racks when the period was finished demonstrated beyond a doubt that he still knew how to buck. It would have been a rare treat to see any man sit him that day in an English saddle and although his owner didn't, he hung onto the reins and as we all rode up to offer any assistance neces-

sary remarked, "If there is anybody here damn fool enough to offer me fifty dollars for this pony, they can have him." I piped up, acknowledging that I was a damn fool.

I had made up my mind long before that the cause of Button's acting up was that he resented what to him were foreign trappings and particularly the standing martingale and the two bits of the Weymouth rig. I rested him two periods and played him the last without any trouble whatever. In fact he played better than I had ever seen him. This was not due to superior riding but to the fact that I had taken the old cowboy bit and bridle off a pony which we used with a stock saddle to lead out my horses from the barn to the field.

Having always fancied the pony, I had observed him closely and determined the cause of his waywardness. Afterwards I always worked him on a Pelham. In this way his head was not hampered by a martingale nor his mouth by a collection of strange bits.

Basically martingales are excellent. More horses will go well with one, especially a running or ring type, than without. The standing martingale is a godsend on the polo field, and also on the road should be used on many horses if for no other reason than simply to insure personal safety.

Do not condemn the Weymouth's either because they added to the cantankerousness of the interesting Buttons. It is an established fact that most horses will go well with this type of tackle.

Last autumn a curious accident occurred in Westchester. Two brothers, both with long and varied experience, and both real horsemen, not just good riders, were out together. The younger man was a bit ahead cantering slowly when his brother's horse, new to both of them, came cantering by riderless. Back fifty yards on the ground, unconscious, lay the older man. Fortunately his injuries were not serious, probably a slight

concussion. He remembered nothing, but in as much as the horse, upon careful examination, showed no signs of having been down, it is the concensus of opinion of horsemen who know about the case that the rider was struck by the horse tossing his head.

A properly adjusted standing martingale is just the thing for these head tossers and back strikers, and would probably have prevented this accident.

Everyone has his preference. Some for a well-mannered horse prefer a hunting snaffle with a running martingale with either a cavasson or a broad nose-band to strengthen and dress up the bridle. Neither of these extras are necessary, but even with a running martingale greatly improve the appearance of the equipment. If a horse needs more bit than a Bridoon or a snaffle with barrel fittings at the rings, then some variation of the Pelham is advisable. With the use of this type the advantages of a curb and snaffle are ob-

• EQUIPMENT •

tained without a change of bridle. There are several styles of Pelhams such as the Rugby, or polo, the straight mouth, the high port, and the Mullen mouth.

Recent experience has brought me to the opinion that for well-schooled horses with sensitive mouths the Pelham has much in its favor, especially when it is necessary to mount indifferent riders. In such cases one can admonish them to go easy on the curb and in as much as there is only a straight solid bar on the snaffle rings they cannot pinch nor as readily irritate a good mouth.

My experience with the Pelhams has been largely with the Rugby which has given me a great deal of satisfaction. I have had good luck with them on a number of fussy horses which were too much of a handful on a snaffle and resented the curb and snaffle combination of the deservedly popular Weymouths.

For schooling there is to my mind nothing superior to a Weymouth. Even though a

horse has been originally bitted with a snaffle or possibly a western bit such as is used on cow ponies, a Weymouth is excellent as it enables the rider to feel the mouth with either the snaffle or the curb or both as the occasion demands. With a green horse this bit in combination with the standing martingale and cavasson provides a decided factor of safety, helps to eliminate the development of bad habits, and shortens the period of schooling. The benefits of this can easily be seen as with an accurately adjusted martingale the horse's head can be kept in proper position once it has been determined.

Without going into the subject of special rigs like the Hitchcock gag and many other worthy devices for the unusual horse or rider, it is sufficient to recommend a careful study of what your horse's mouth requires, not only from the standpoint of bits and martingales, but also your own hands. Study the feel of your horse's mouth. He will help you and

if you are a bit observing it does not take long to discover what is needed, so above all recognize that individuality is just as pronounced in horse as in rider.

Even a puller should not be condemned; and it is a fairly generally accepted theory that pullers are made, not born. This does not mean that a big heavyweight Irish Hunter, all things in training being equal, is not more apt to take hold than a light good-tempered little thoroughbred.

Dr. H. C. Fleming, a finished horseman, suggests a theory which is not only plausible but logical. His contention is that many riders put such pressure upon their reins that the bits, coming against the horse's mouth, gradually numbs it so that if for any reason a quick stop is necessary or the horse is galloping and has to be taken down a terrific pull is required to penetrate the numbness. In such instances the difficulty is that the rider and not the horse is the puller. He

illustrated this point convincingly in the case of that sterling gelding Grey Eagle which he formerly owned. An experienced rider was up on this able pony and faulted him only upon one point, he pulled.

The Doctor took the horse, galloped him at a fast clip—with an easy rein—not loose but light, and stopped him at will with only the slightest additional pressure on the bit. Needless to say the theory was in this case successfully demonstrated, and such knowledge and skill of hand proclaim the Horseman. Not too much emphasis, especially where one is riding really good horses, can be given to the importance of hands. And it is with genuine regret that we see many of the younger generation often ignoring this essential.

However, there are conspicuous exceptions. At The Riding Club show in New York a few years ago it was my pleasure to see a superb young horsewoman (I think Miss Otely) who

has not only rare hands and an excellent seat but also outstanding patience and courage. She studies her mounts and they do her bidding.

There is a type of rider who advocates for practically all horses the lightest type of bits—often even going so far as to use leather or rubber bits without careful study of the horse's mouth. In many cases this is not only unjust to the horse but hazardous for mount and rider alike. I do not wish to give the impression that I condemn these bits—far from it—but there is only one case in ten where they are used that they are necessary. As a general hypothesis, a light hand and a heavy bit is far better than a rubber bit and a heavy hand. Do not expect your bit to offset your lack of knowledge of your horse's mouth, nor your inability to feel it.

Two very important articles of equipment are stirrup leathers and stirrups. A good wide leather is a marked advantage particu-

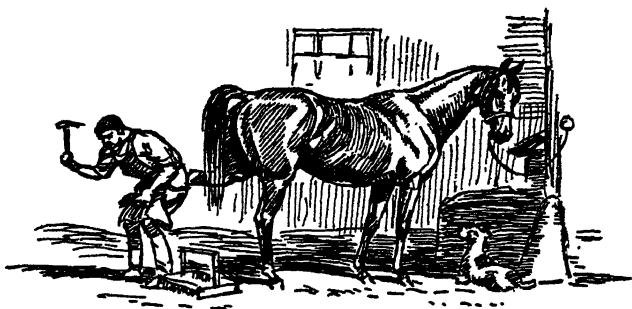
larly if no one else is riding your saddle so that the leather becomes set to the boot leg. However much can be done to increase comfort of leathers by constant soaping and twisting so that it becomes set to the shape of the boot. The buckles on leathers should be changed slightly once or twice a year according to the amount of riding to prevent all the wear coming in one spot. This will prolong the life of the leathers which is worthwhile now as they are fairly costly and leather improves with age. A good wide heavy stirrup iron is the best, made of never-rust or monel metal or any of the better grade treated steels which will not tarnish and which can be kept well polished without any plating to wear off. Personally I have always depended upon a fairly large wide stirrup rather than any of the so-called safety devices: and although having been thrown my full quota I have really only been dragged once in a great many years.

• EQUIPMENT •

There are numerous types of girths and the old-fashioned woven web one is not to be despised by any means. It can be kept clean indefinitely with a jerry brush and a little Crown soap once in a while. Of course in many of the old stables pipe clay was used for this purpose. The folded leather girth and the Fitz William, which only differs by having keepers and a slip girth, are an excellent form of band especially on a big horse. A great many experienced horsemen swear by a Bolding girth, others of us have preference for the other types, but for most riding a good folded leather girth is entirely satisfactory.

Reins are certainly important and should be constantly cared for; but there seems little to be said in the way of advice for their selection, as it is what seems to be comfortable in your hands and what suits your personal choice. A good deal can be said for riding with the snaffle reins on the outside and having them a trifle wider than the curb. This

is perhaps more appreciated when one is schooling a horse and for purposes of more rapid and definite control rides with the hands split, which gives him an opportunity of slipping his snaffle or curb without running any danger of jabbing a young horse's mouth. This is useful in getting a horse to flex or play with his bits.



STABLES AND BARNES

YEARS ago in America we were prone to speak of a building in which to house horses as a stable, whereas in present day parlance stable is more apt to mean the horses and barn or barns, the structures sheltering them. Anyway, be sure that your stable is well barned or that your horses are or stable is well stabled.

There has never lived a horseman who did not believe that he could design a stable which would be the world's best.

Some have more costly ideas; and castles in Spain would be mere shanties in comparison. However, others have held the theory

that it was not a question of costly materials and equipment but the essentials for comfort which keep our friends and playmates happy indoors. However, one word of warning! Let the architect do anything he pleases with the main house, the greenhouses, garage and superintendent's houses, but do not let him run riot around the horse barns, and do not let any cows or chickens or any other farmer's pets go under the same roof. There are lots of architects who are splendid horsemen, but when they "take pen in hand" as it were, they want to "work out" a design, and they remember all that they ever learned about colonial mansions and adapted pergolas and heaven help the horses and the grooms. Get some practical horseman who knows the climatic conditions of the locality in which you are going to build, and the type of riding and kind of horses to provide for and let him make the floor plans, indicating dimensions and prepare some general specifications. Then talk

• STABLES AND BARNES •

these over with the head groom. Then when you see the architect—be brave. Remember that some of the greatest winners have come out of whitewashed sheds.

Au revoir

